JUMP COMICS

巻ノ十二

大いなる飛翔!!

馬

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NARUTO
-ナルト-

岸本斉史

岸本斉史

Recently, DVDs have become prominent at movie rental stores. Certainly, DVDs are nice because unlike videotapes, you can just rent one disc and not have to choose what kind of audio track you want or whether you want subtitles or not until right when you watch it. That's really great, but...DVDs don't include coming attractions before the main feature. That's what I was looking forward to...

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2002

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

JUMP COMICS

NARUTO

ナルト

巻ノ十二

大いなる飛翔!!

岸本斉史

主な登場人物

うちは
サスケ

うずまき
ナルト

春野サクラ

ガイ

日向ネジ

ロック・リー

テンテン

薬師カブト

奈良シカマル

犬塚キバ&
赤丸

日向ヒナタ

山中いの

秋道チョウジ

油女シノ

Note from the uploader/translator: These scanlations are just a hobby of mine, I don't get paid for the Naruto colored manga translations, but they do take a lot of time (hours) and effort (photoshop) to work on; so please provide encouragement by joining this discord server! I would appreciate it ^^
Since this is such a niche thing. To me, it feels like a waste, since I'm spending some hours working on these pages, and then less than 1-2 people ever see them....So I hope you join! Thanks!

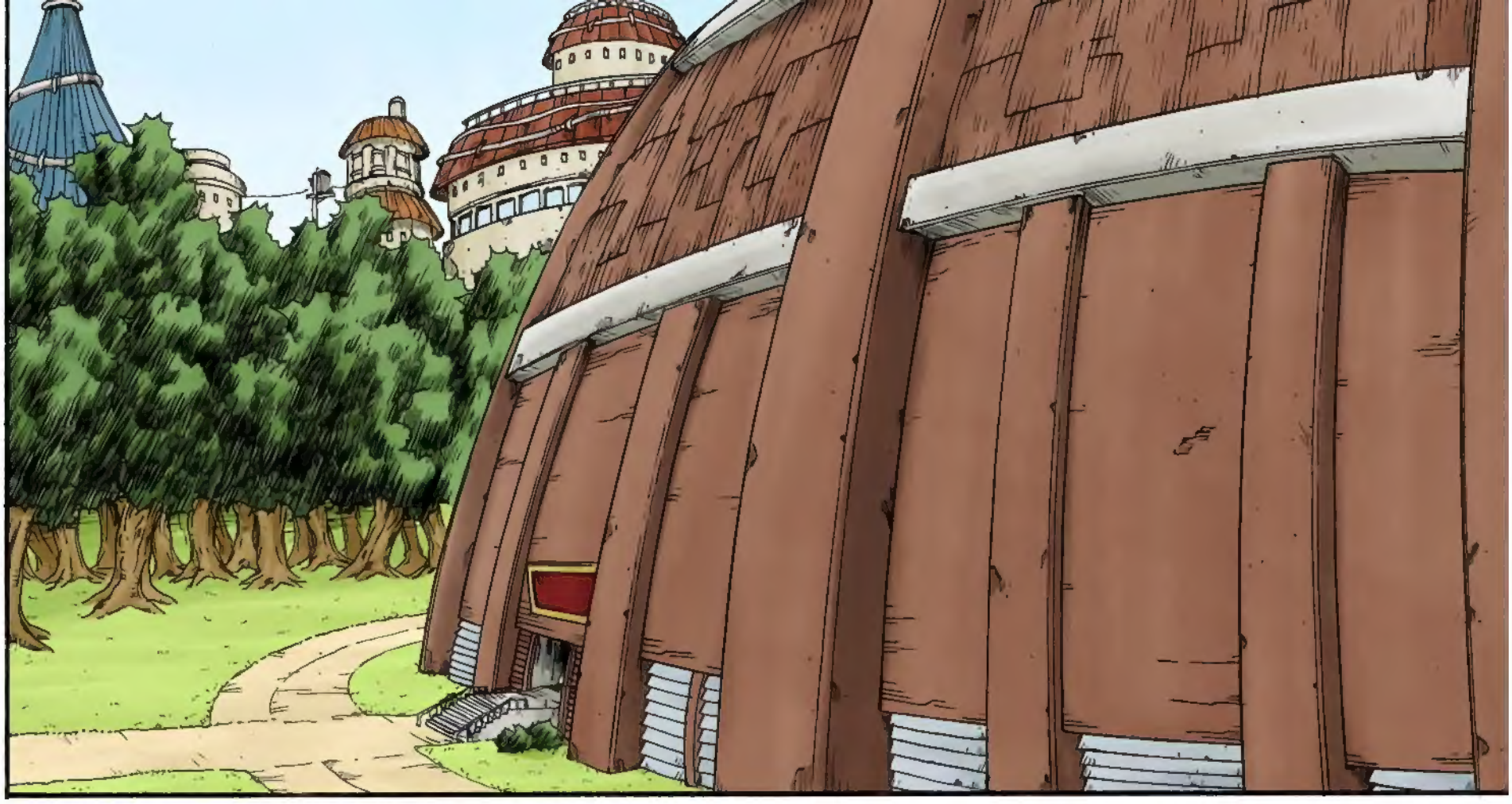
https://discord.gg/ZTmzect

My goal is to post colored ENGLISH chapters (from this chapter) up to Chapter 700, and I want YOU as a part of this journey (until chapter 700.)
You don't have to be talkative, just drop a line, and hang out. I will do an @everyone ping whenever I finish a chapter.

Also, my email is AHELPFULLOLI@GMAIL.COM if you don't use discord. If you want me to work on
other projects for FREE, (I don't accept money)
feel free to suggest them! (Discord > Email though.)

Anyway. Have a nice week! Thank YOU for being a part of this!

ナンバー 100：



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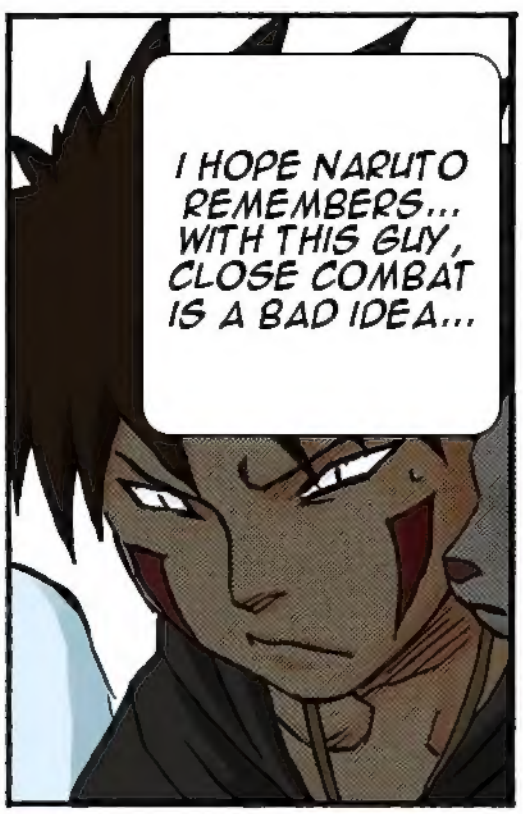
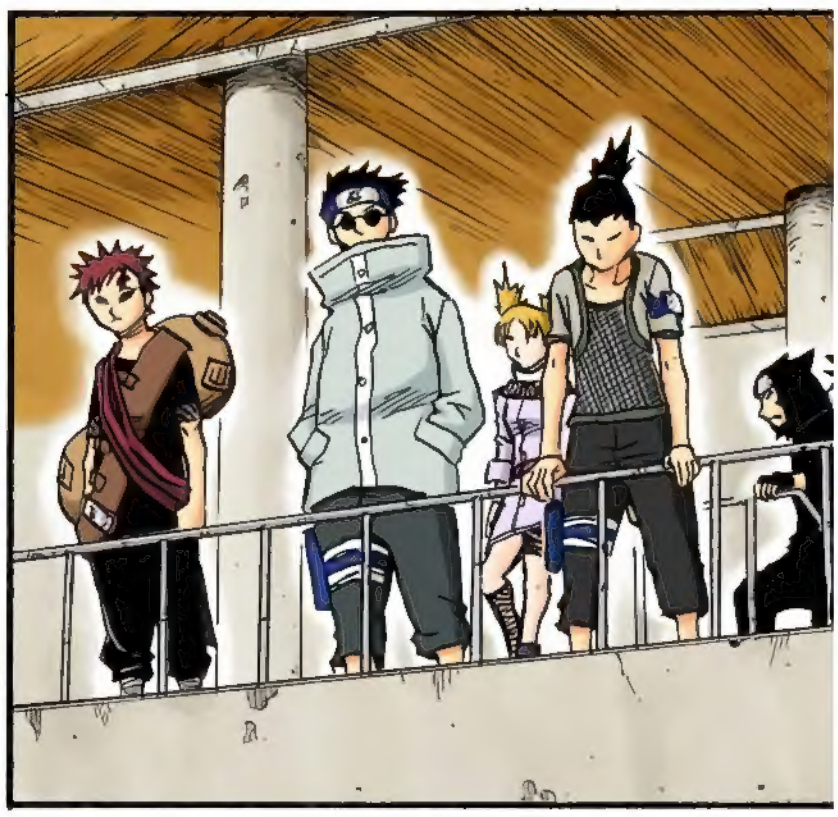

I HOPE NARUTO REMEMBERS... WITH THIS GUY, CLOSE COMBAT IS A BAD IDEA...

NEJI CAN SEE THE TENKE-TSU...
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WIN WITH A FART THIS TIME, NARUTO.



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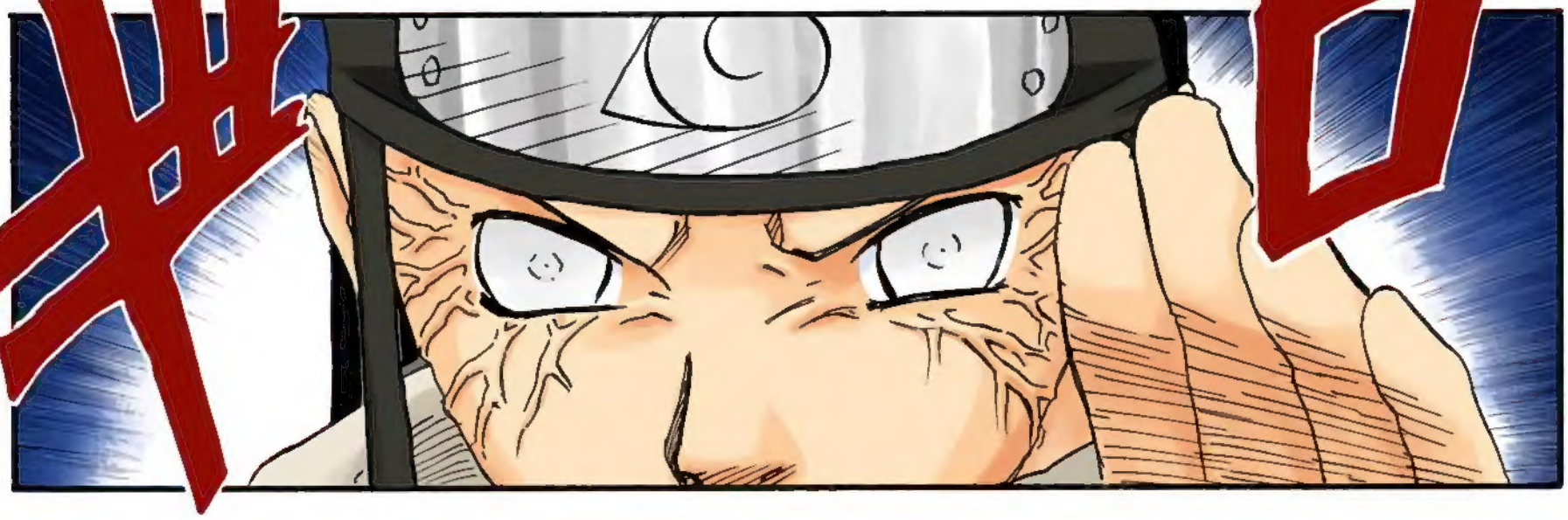

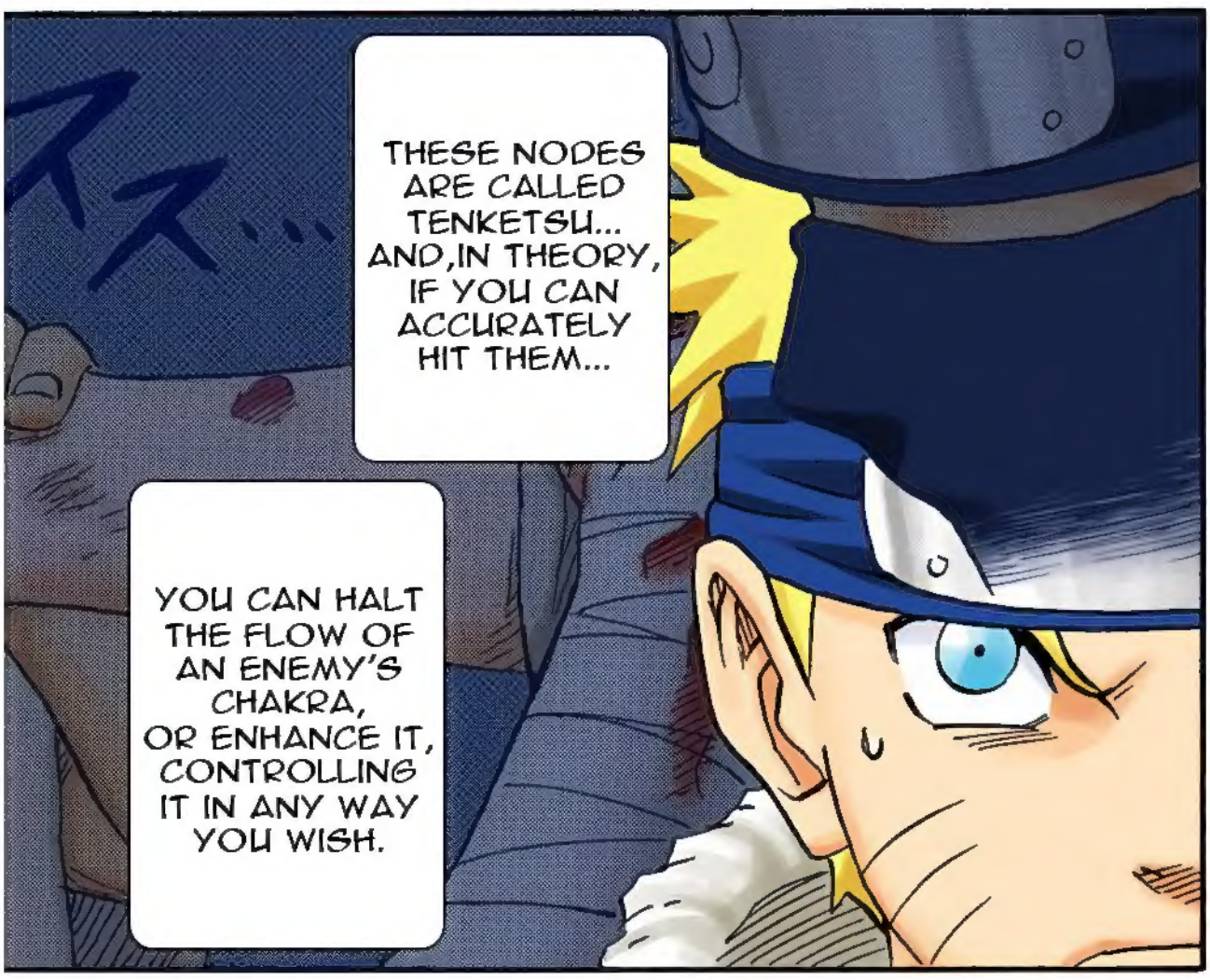
THESE NODES ARE CALLED TENKETSU... AND,IN THEORY, IF YOU CAN ACCURATELY HIT THEM...
YOU CAN HALT THE FLOW OF AN ENEMY'S CHAKRA, OR ENHANCE IT, CONTROLLING IT IN ANY WAY YOU WISH.

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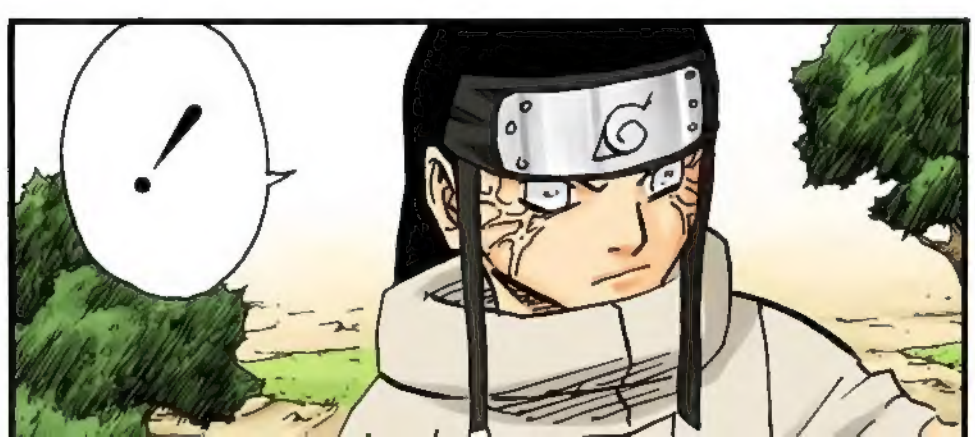
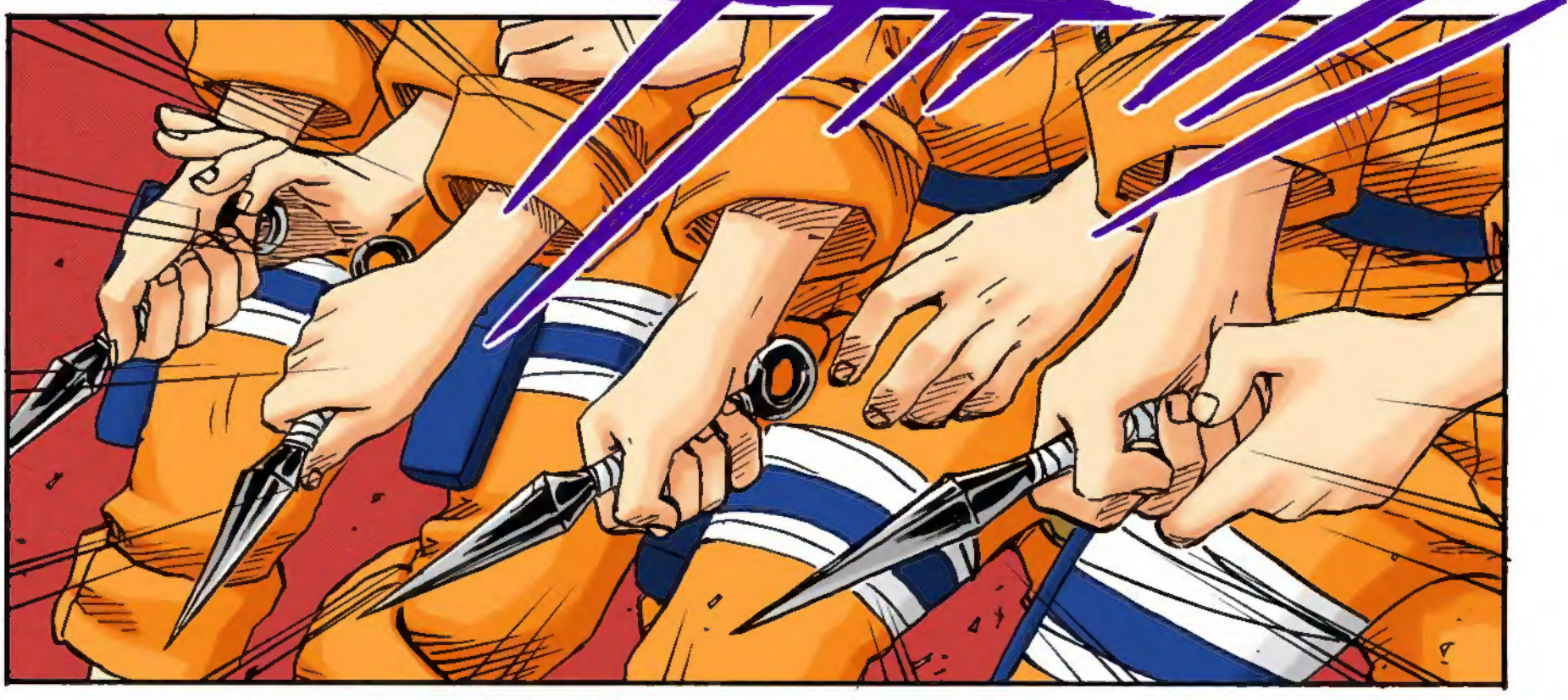

!

SO I'VE GOT TO FIGHT HIM FROM A DISTANCE...
IN OTHER WORDS, IF I GET TOO CLOSE TO HIM, HE'LL PRESS MY POINTS AND I WON'T BE ABLE TO USE ANY JUTSU...

KAGE-BUSHIN NO JUTSU! ART OF THE SHADOW DOPPEL-GANGER !!!



SHADOW DOPPEL-GANGERS?!

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...SHADOW DOPPELGANGER IS A JÔNIN-LEVEL TECHNIQUE.

I'M SURPRISED THAT HE CAN PULL OFF SOMETHING SO ADVANCED...

HEH... HE'S A QUIRKY KID.

GOOD THINKING, NARUTO! SHADOW DOPPEL-GANGERS ARE IDEAL...

THIS IS GONNA BE INTERESTING...

,,,EVEN MY BYAKUGAN WON'T ENABLE ME TO DETERMINE WHICH OF THE BODIES IS THE GENUINE ATRICLE.

I SEE... SINCE HIS CHAKRA IS EQUALLY AND EVENLY DISTRIBUTED AMONG ALL OF THE DOPPEL-GANGERS...

IT'S USELESS... NEJI'S DEFENSE IS PERFECT...

HEH... DON'T BE TOO CONFI-DENT!

THEN COME AT ME... IF YOU DARE...

BUT... IN THE END, THERE IS ONLY ONE ACTUAL BODY.

...ME, OKAY?!

...UNDER-ESTIMATE...

DON'T...

HEY!

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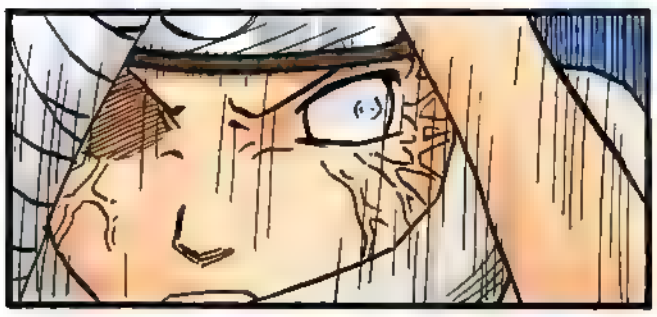
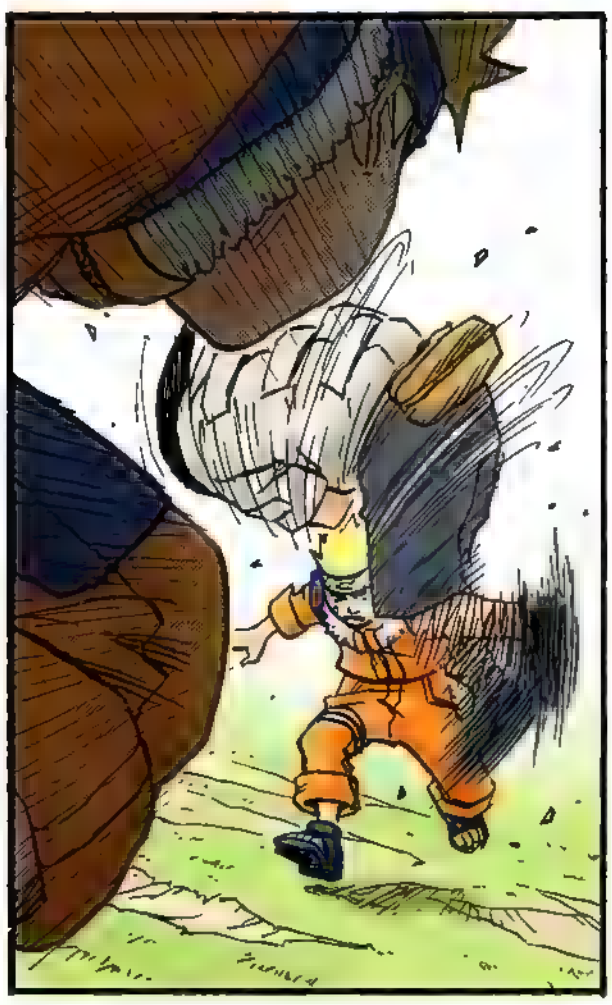
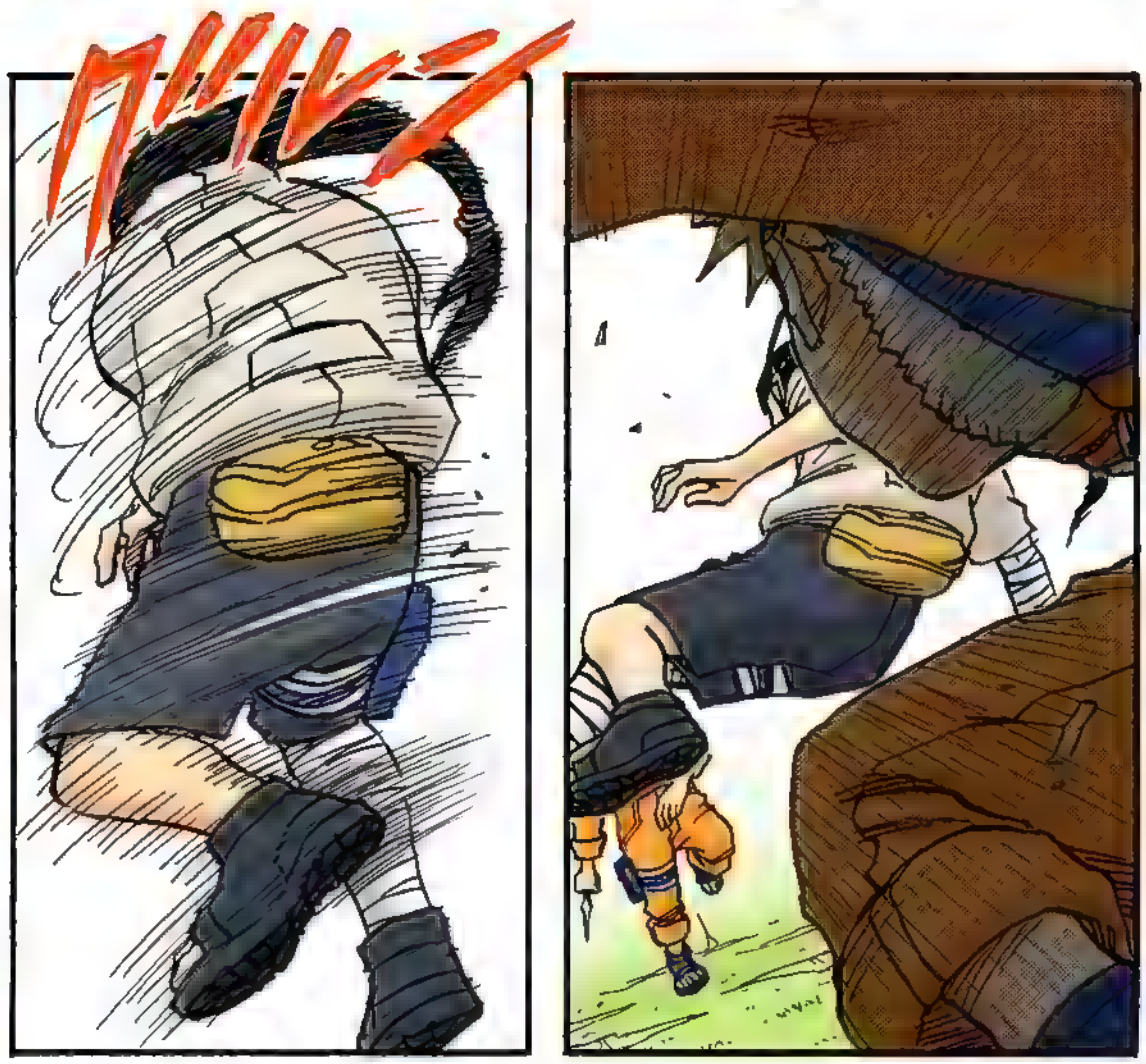
OVER HERE!!

ドン







ARGH!!

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!!

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HAH!

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UGH!

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7!!

WHAT THE...? DOES HE HAVE EYES ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD OR SOMETHING?

ボン

IN OTHER WORDS, YOUR ENTIRE DESTINY IS SET FROM THE TIME YOU'RE BORN.

...ABILITIES AND TALENT ARE DETERMINED AT BIRTH.

...I CAN PRETTY MUCH TELL, WITH THESE EYES OF MINE...

I DON'T THINK THAT'S GONNA HAPPEN.

...YOU WANT TO BE HOKAGE, HUH?

.....

WELL... ARE YOU SAYING THAT ANYONE CAN BECOME HOKAGE... IF THEY JUST TRY HARD ENOUGH?

ONLY A SELECT FEW SHINOBI ARE EVEN CONSIDERED FOR HOKAGE.

WHY ARE YOU SO STUBBORN?! YOU'RE ALWAYS SO SURE THAT THE FUTURE IS FULL OF DOOM AND GLOOM...

WHY?!

.....

EACH PERSON'S LIFE CONSISTS ONLY OF BEING SWEPT ALONG IN THE INESCAPABLE CURRENT OF HIS DESTINY...

...HAVE ONLY ONE THING IN COMMON... ONE SHARED FATE...

ALL OF US...

WAKE UP AND FACE REALITY!

YOU CAN'T GET THERE BY TRYING... YOU HAVE TO BE PRE-SELECTED.

THOSE WHO WILL BECOME HOKAGE ARE BORN WITH THAT FATE.

...DEATH.

HIS GRUDGE AGAINST THE FAMILY'S MAIN BRANCH IS STILL STRONG...

THOSE EYES...

.....

I GUESS I'M JUST A SORE LOSER!!

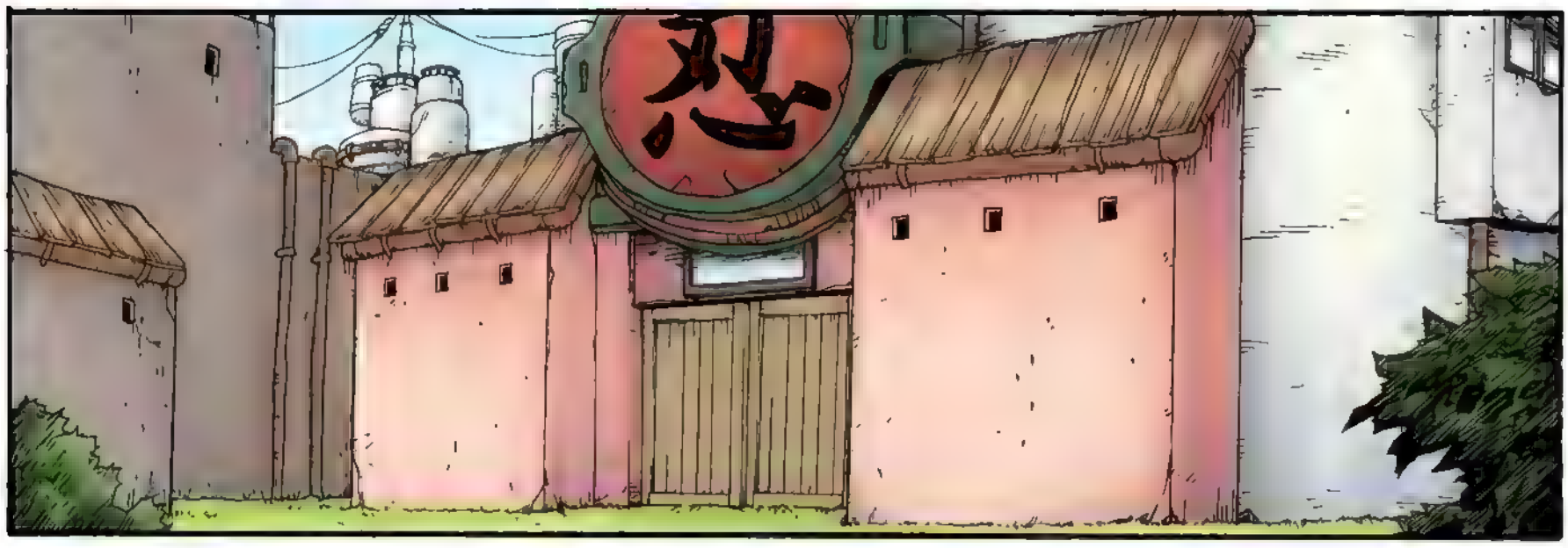
WELL... SO WHAT?!

THAT FOOL... IF HE KEEPS MAKING SO MANY DOPPELGANGERS, HE'LL RUN OUT OF CHAKRA IN NO TIME...

HMPH! I TOLD YOU... YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE!

I'VE SEEN THROUGH YOUR PATTERN OF ATTACK ALREADY.

I'M NOT AN IDIOT, YOU KNOW.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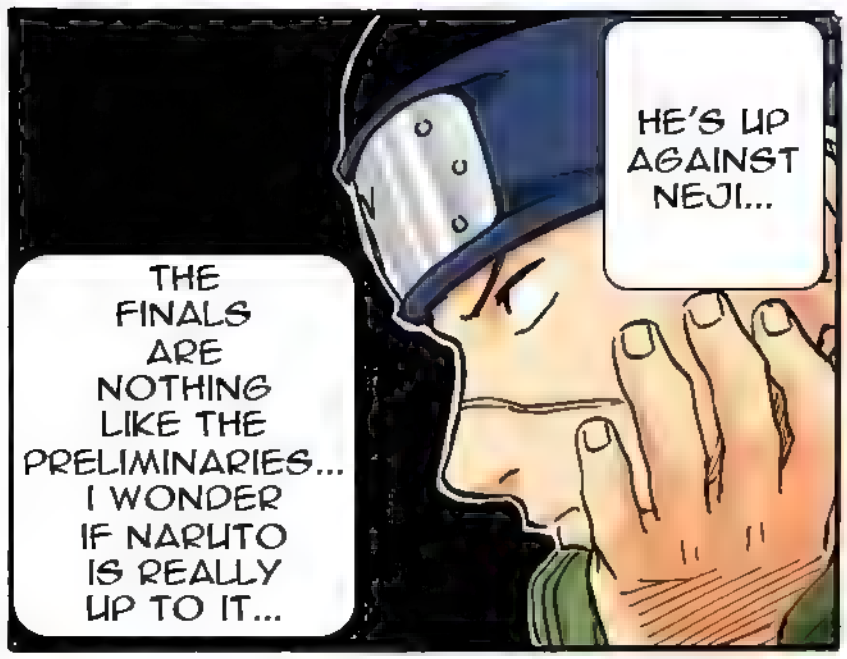
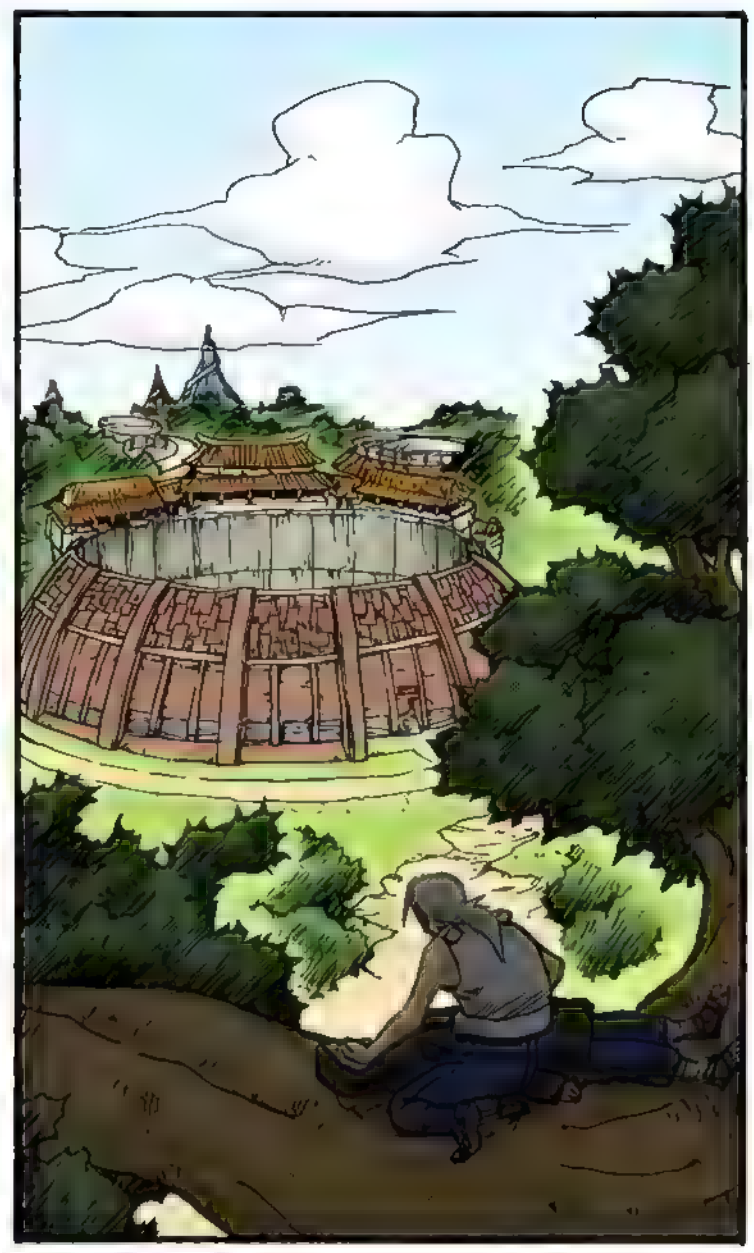

HE'S UP AGAINST NEJI...
THE FINALS ARE NOTHING LIKE THE PRELIMINARIES... I WONDER IF NARUTO IS REALLY UP TO IT...

SIGH...

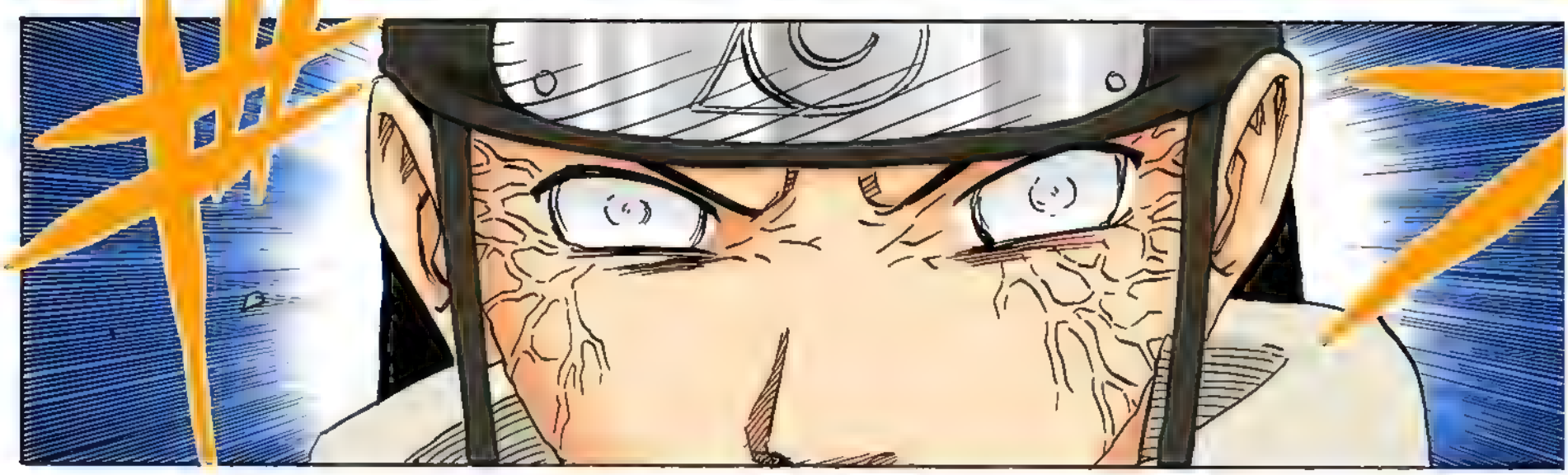
I HOPE YOU CAN AT LEAST GIVE ME A GOOD SHOW, NARUTO...

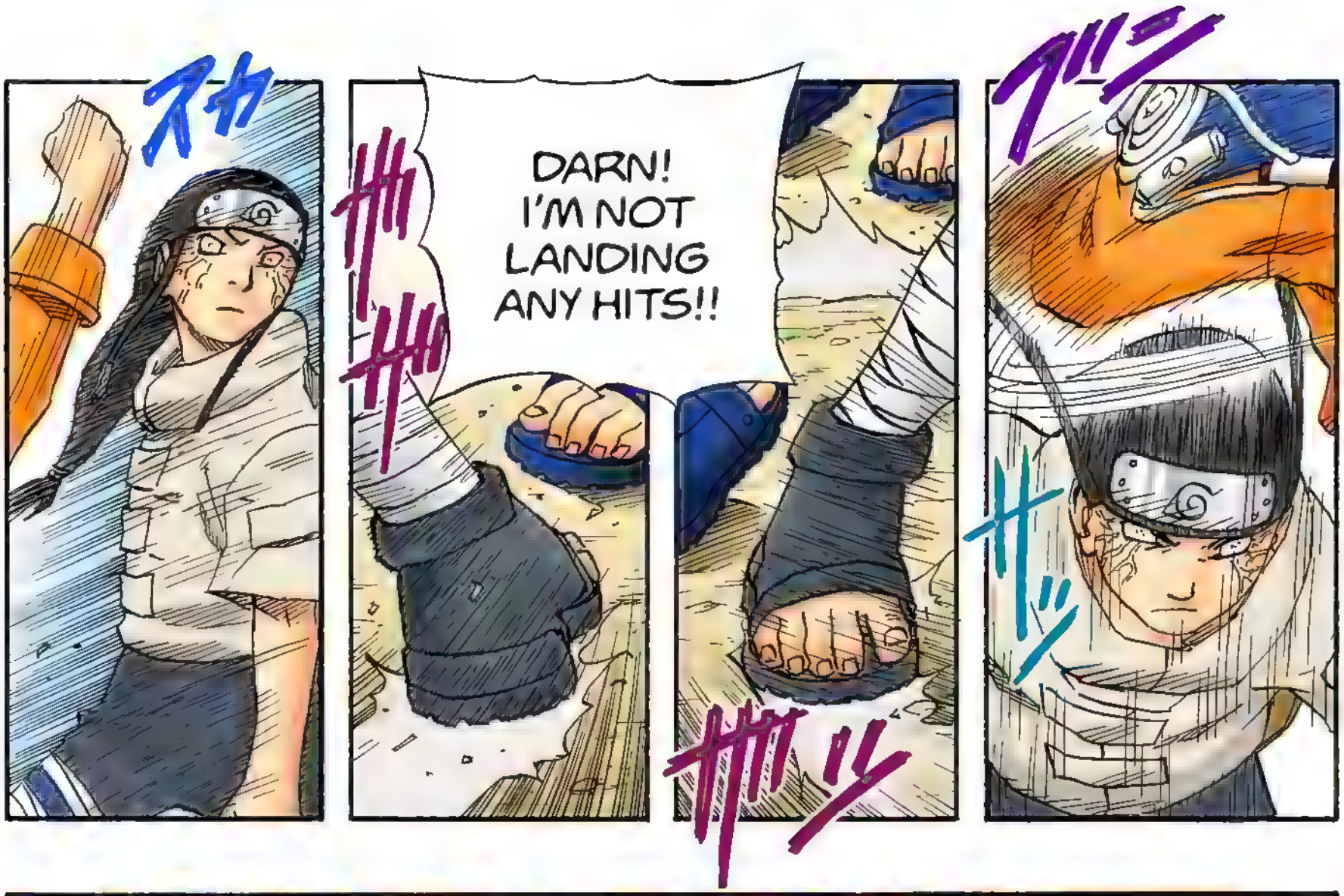


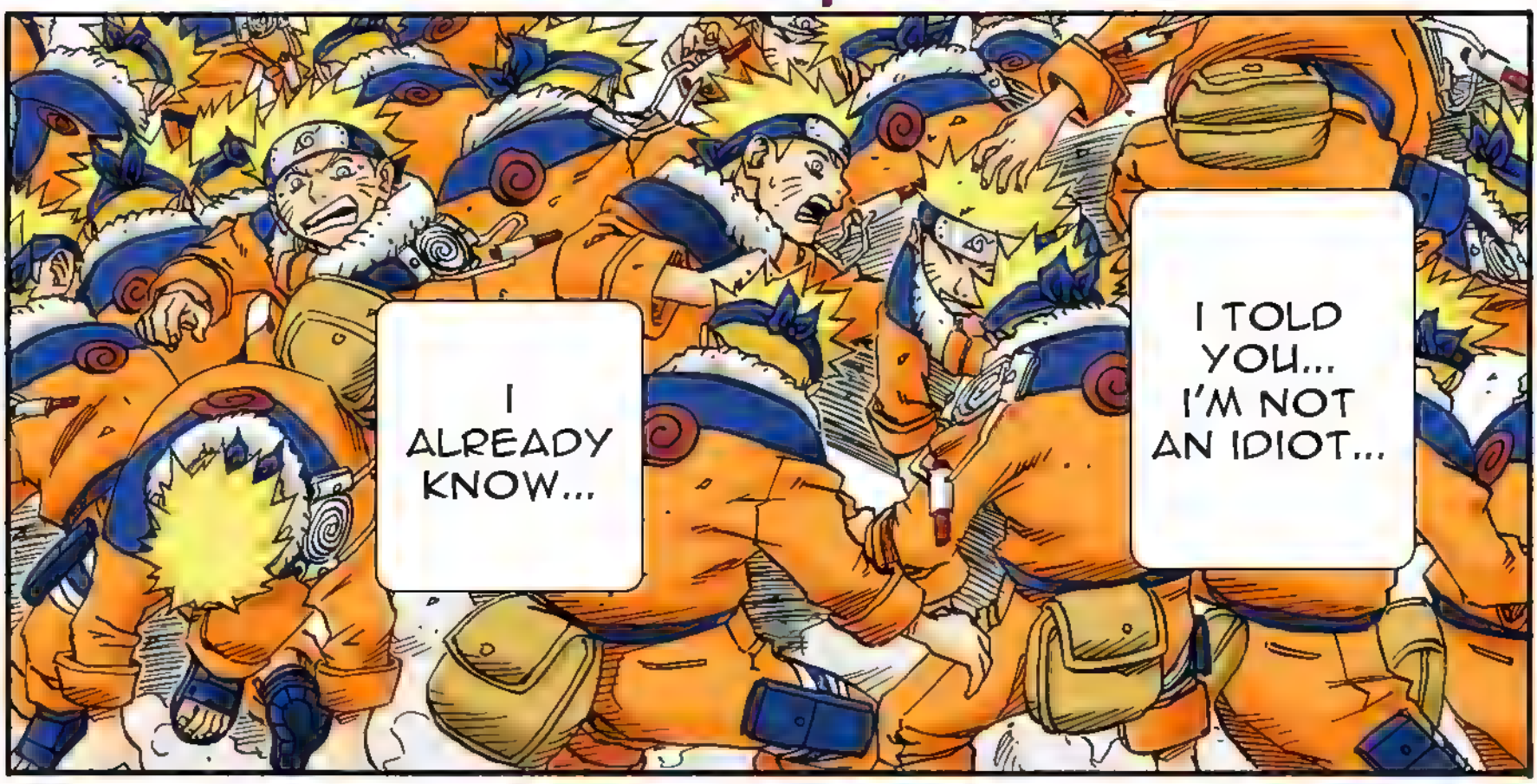
I'VE GOT QUITE A TOUGH JOB AHEAD OF ME...

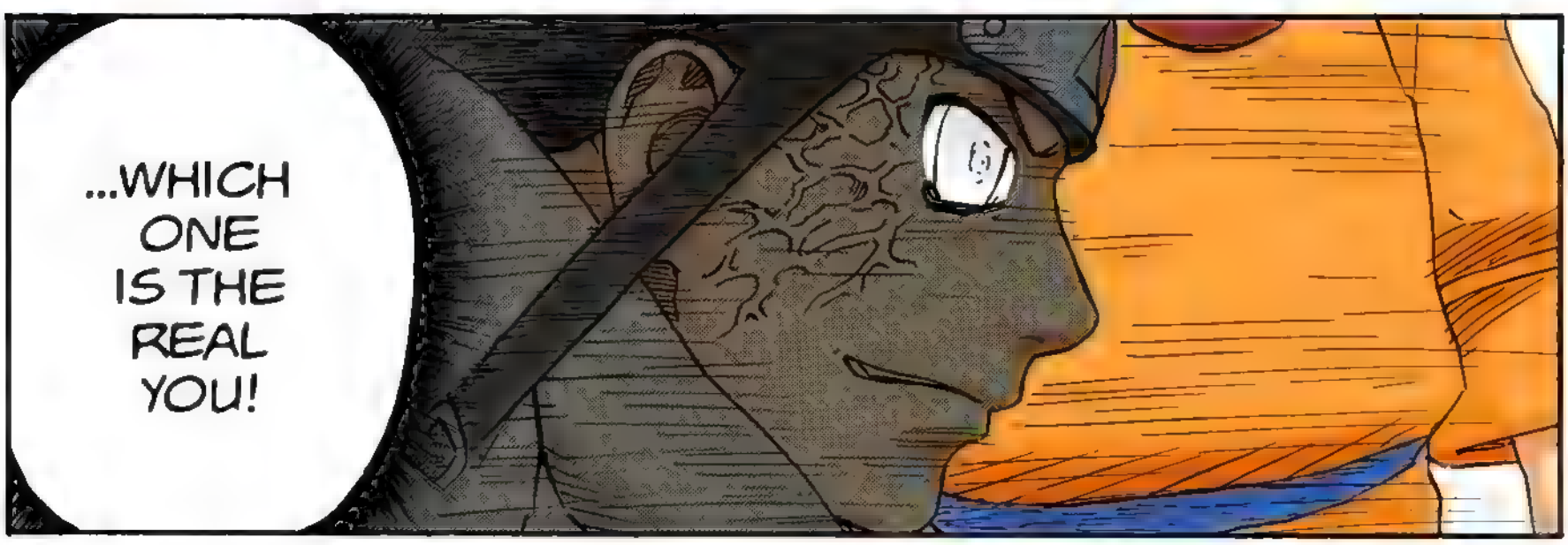
AHH!

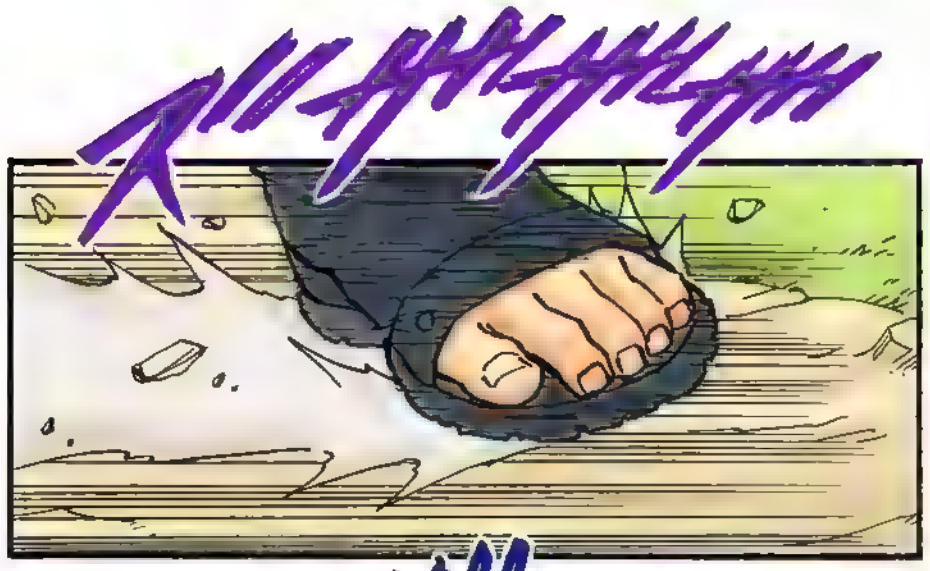
ROAR!

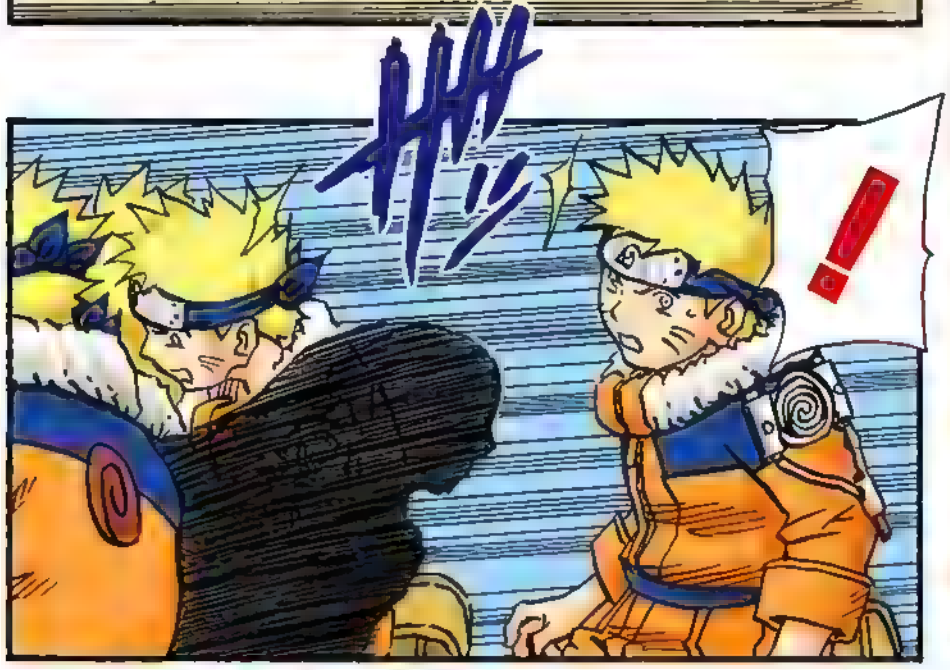



DARN! I'M NOT LANDING ANY HITS!!


I ALREADY KNOW...
I TOLD YOU... I'M NOT AN IDIOT...

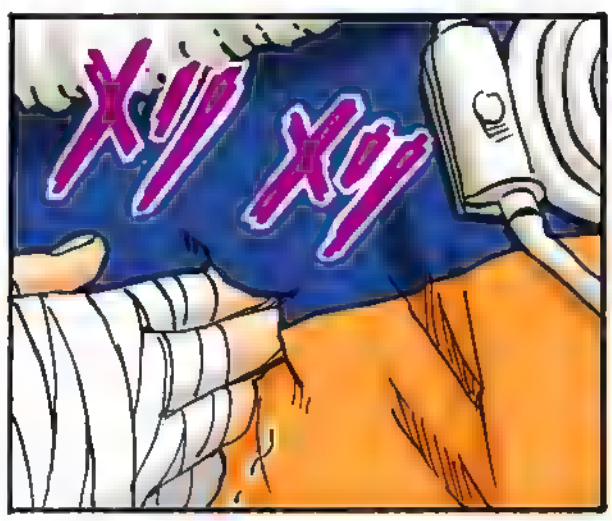

...WHICH ONE IS THE REAL YOU!





UNH!

THE MORE THE OTHERS ATTACK, THE MORE THAT ONE STANDS OUT...
...THE ONE WHO HANGS BACK, AFRAID TO GET CLOSE... FEARING ANY STRIKE ON HIS TENKETSU...



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ピク
YOU'RE THE REAL ONE!!
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THAT'S IT... HE'S DONE FOR...
NARUTO...!!
!
...A- AND...
HEH... HEH HEH...
...I TOLD YOU IT WAS USELESS.
...I TOLD YOU... NOT TO MAKE SO MANY ASSUMPTIONS!

WHAT?!

ボン

...IT CAN'T BE!!

WHOA!

NARUTO...!

ALL RIGHT! GO, NARUTO!!

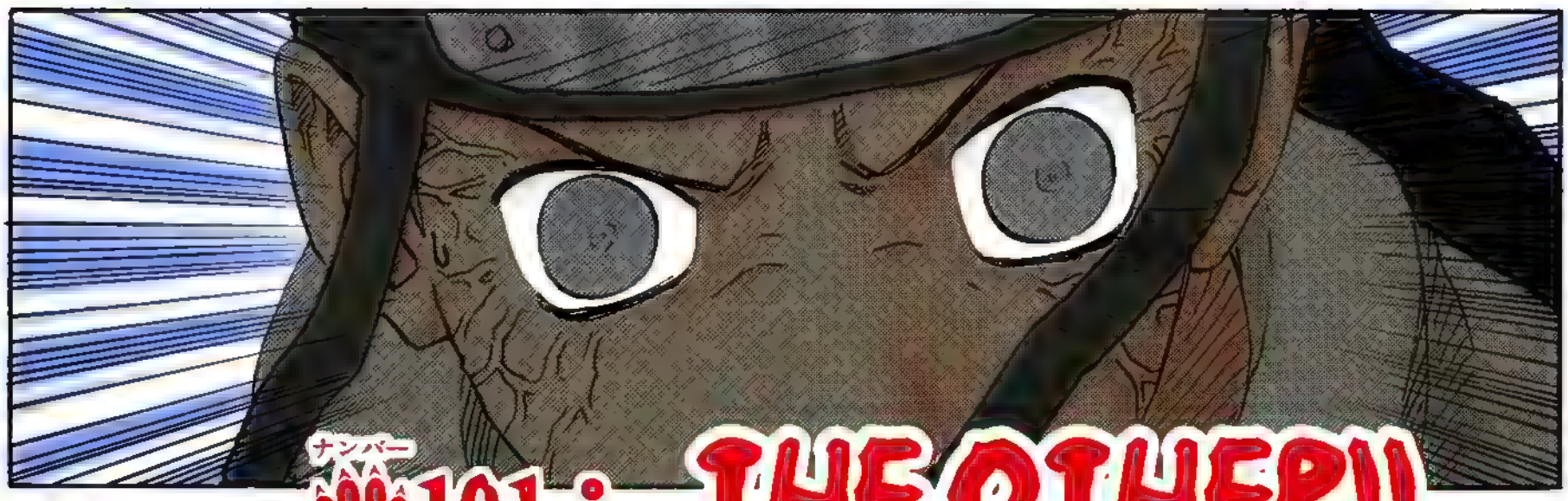
TOWARD ONE OF HIS DOPPEL-GANGERS?!

HE ANTICIPATED MY THOUGHTS AND...HE DELIBERATELY STEERED ME...

...I CAME INTO THIS MATCH FULLY PREPARED TO LOSE!!

FROM THE START...

NEJI...



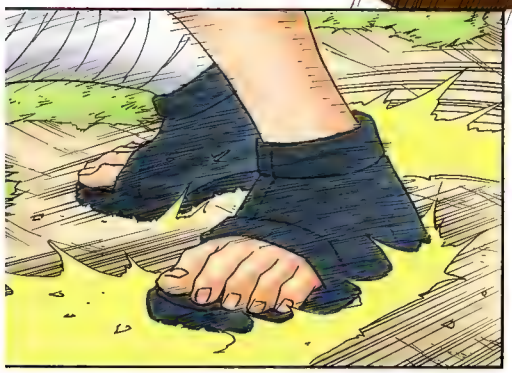
ナンバー 101 : THE OTHER!!

ナンバー

101：

カルイル

THE OTHER!!



HUH?!

!?

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!

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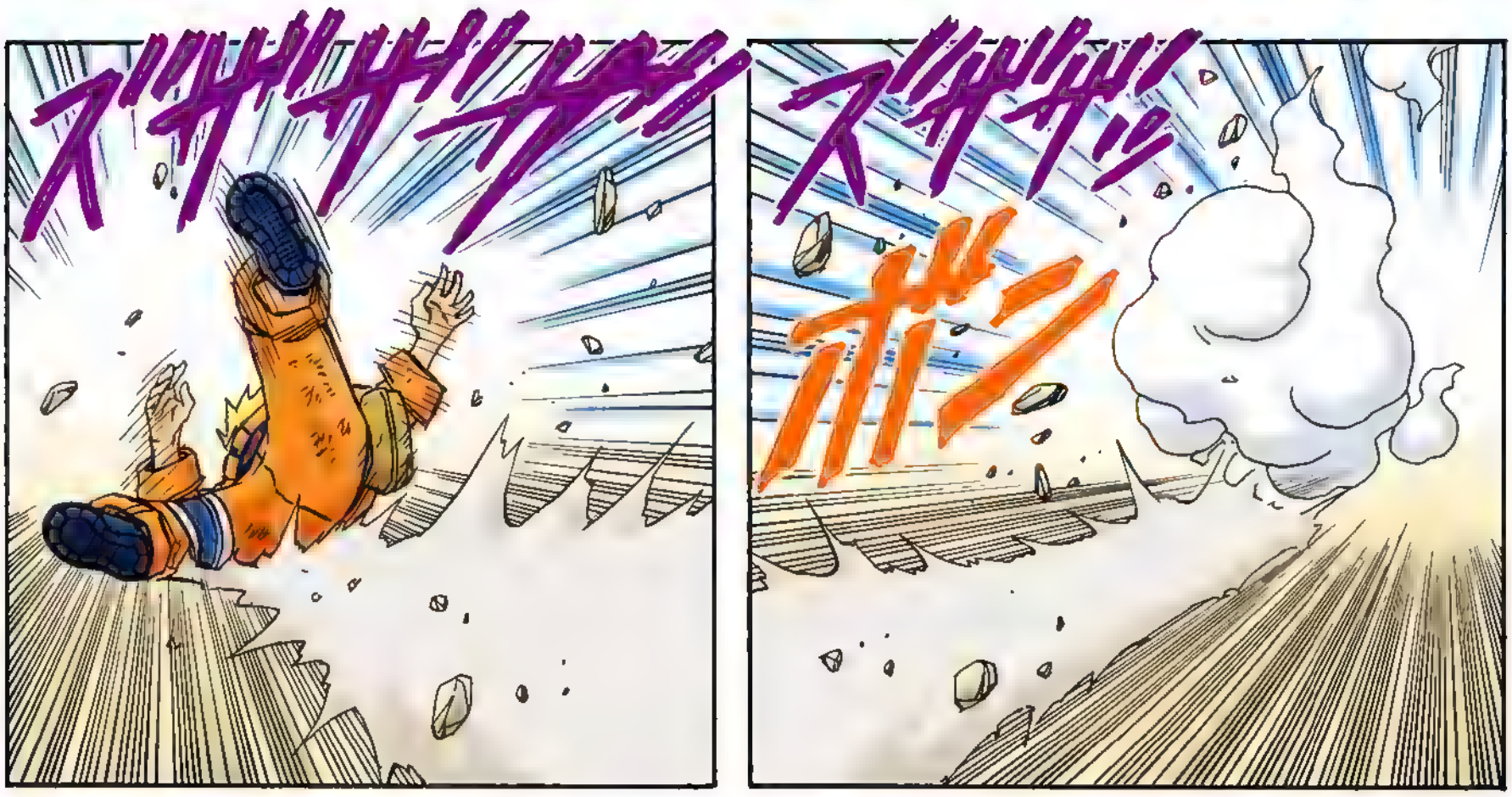
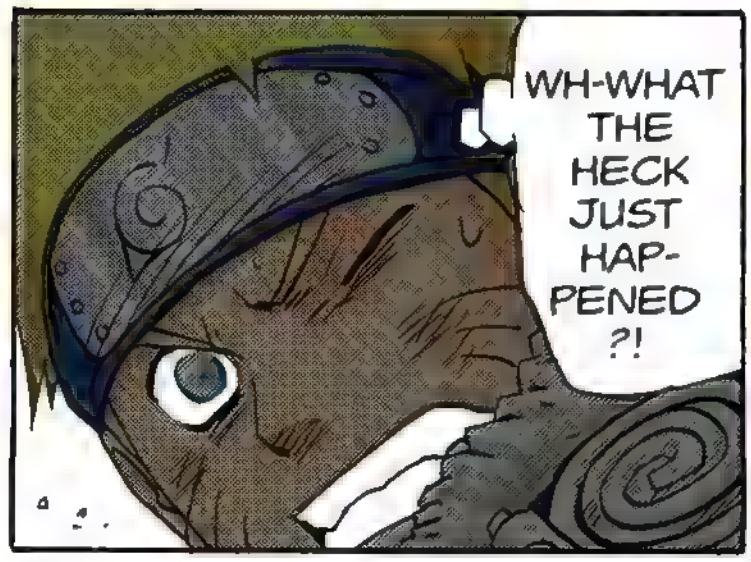
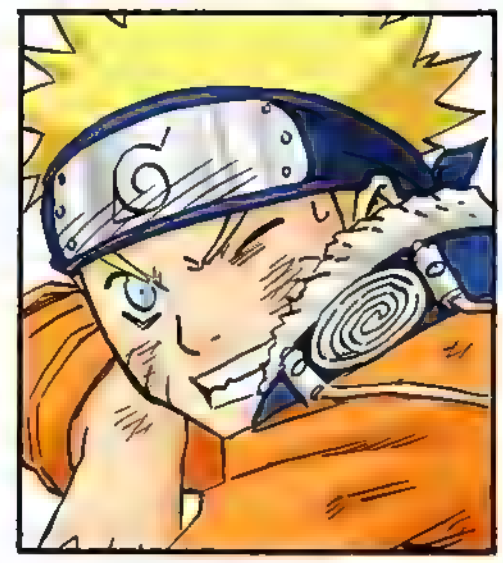
HYAH!!



UNH...


WH-WHAT THE HECK JUST HAP-PENED ?!



!!

YOU THOUGHT...

...YOU HAD ME BEAT?

... UNBELIEV-ABLE...

KOFF KOFF..

THAT'S!

I KNOW NARUTO LANDED THAT PUNCH!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

HEH HEH...

THAT'S NEJI'S DEFENSE ...

... ROTATION ...!

AND WITH THAT SAME ALL-SEEING EYE, HE CAN ANTICIPATE ALL OF HIS OPPONENT'S ATTACKS...

THE VISUAL RANGE OF NEJI'S BYAKUGAN IS ALMOST A FULL 360 DEGREES... IN OTHER WORDS, HE CAN PRETTY MUCH SEE A FULL CIRCLE AROUND HIM...

360°

HALTING THE ENEMY'S ATTACK WITH A COCOON OF CHAKRA.

THE INSTANT BEFORE AN ATTACK REACHES HIM, HE EMITS A LARGE AMOUNT OF CHAKRA POINTS ALL OVER HIS BODY...

FROM NOW ON, NEJI WILL BE SHIELDED WITHIN...

THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS PALM ROTATION!!

NORMALLY, CHAKRA THAT IS EMITTED FROM CHAKRA POINTS IS DIFFICULT TO CONTROL. EVEN JONIN CAN USUALLY ONLY UTILIZE SUCH CHAKRA FROM A SINGLE BODY PART AT A TIME, LIKE THE HANDS OR FEET...

REPELLING AND REFLECTING THE ATTACK!!

AND THEN HE MOVES HIS BODY IN A CIRCLE LIKE A SPINNING TOP...

YOU COULD CONSIDER IT ANOTHER KIND OF ABSOLUTE DEFENSE...

BUT NEJI, A MASTER OF THE GENTLE FIST, CAN EMIT CHAKRA FROM HIS ENTIRE BODY... AND WITH THAT EMITTED POWER ALONE, CAN PHYSICALLY BLOCK ATTACKS...

...THAN GAARA'S !!

...THAT'S EVEN MORE POWERFUL ...

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...HIS BRILLIANCE IS FAR BEYOND WHAT I HAD EVER IMAGINED...

BUT NEJI WAS ABLE TO INDEPEN-DENTLY RECREATE IT ON HIS OWN...!

THE ROTATION IS A SECRET ART THAT IS PASSED DOWN ONLY WITHIN THE HYUGA MAIN BRANCH... TAUGHT BY THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY TO THE HEIR ALONE...

...TH-THAT'S YOUR...

YOU ARE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF MY 8 TRIGRAMS.

YOU'RE FIN-ISHED ...

MAN!

AND THAT'S NOT THE END OF IT! NEJI'S TRUE SHOW OF STRENGTH IS ONLY BEGINNING...

THAT STANCE... IT CAN'T BE!

GENTLE FIST... 8 TRIGRAMS, 64 PALMS!

!

UNH!

8 TRIGRAMS, 2 PALMS!

8 PALMS!!

4 PALMS!

AUGH!

32
PALMS!!

16
PALMS!!

64
PALMS!!!

...HAS SURPASSED THE MAIN BRANCH ENTIRELY.

A MEMBER OF THE CADET BRANCH...

UGH!!

SHIT!!

.....

IT'S OVER.

SO, THE DIVINE SHINOBI BLOOD OF THE HYUGA CLAN RESIDES IN A CHILD OF THE CADET BRANCH WHO CAN NEVER BECOME HEIR?

HE TRULY IS... A FEAR-SOME NATURAL TALENT...

UGH...

I'VE PRESSED 64 OF THE CHAKRA POINTS AROUND YOUR BODY... YOU CAN NO LONGER EVEN STAND...

OH, HIZASHI... PERHAPS YOU WILL BRING DOWN THE HOUSE OF HYUGA AFTER ALL...

HERE, ON YOUR KNEES BEFORE MY IMMUTABLE STRENGTH... YOU MUST FINALLY COMPREHEND YOUR OWN POWERLESS-NESS!

!!

HEH... IT MUST BE FRUSTRAT-ING...

...UNH...

HEY, HINATA... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

!

HACK HACK...

...IT'S SIMPLY A FANTASY.

BELIEVING THAT YOUR DREAMS WILL COME TRUE IF YOU JUST TRY HARD ENOUGH...

.....

N...NARUTO!!

NARUTO...

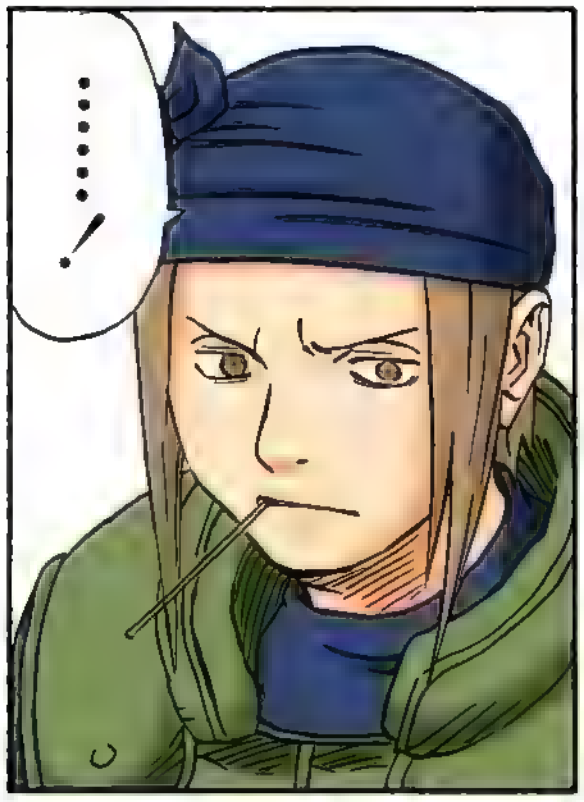
I KNEW IT...

OH NO...

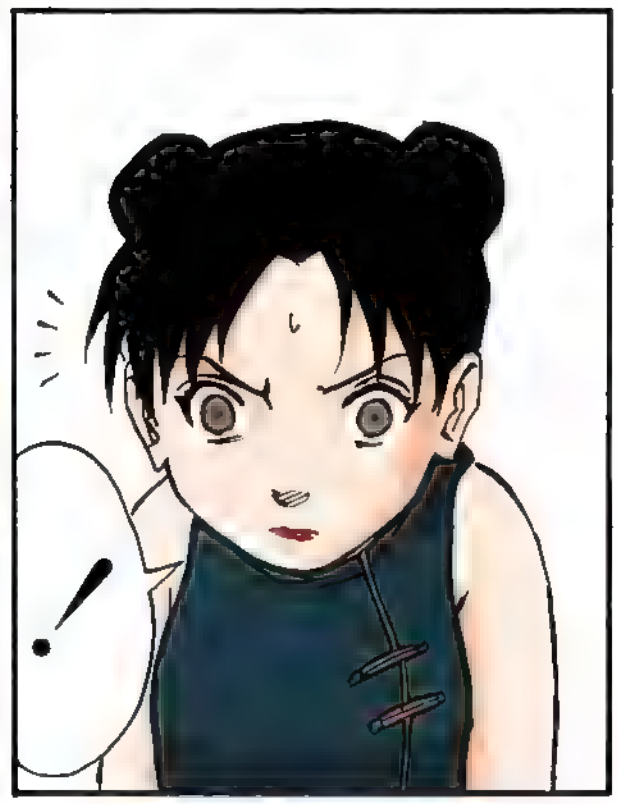
DARN IT...

.....

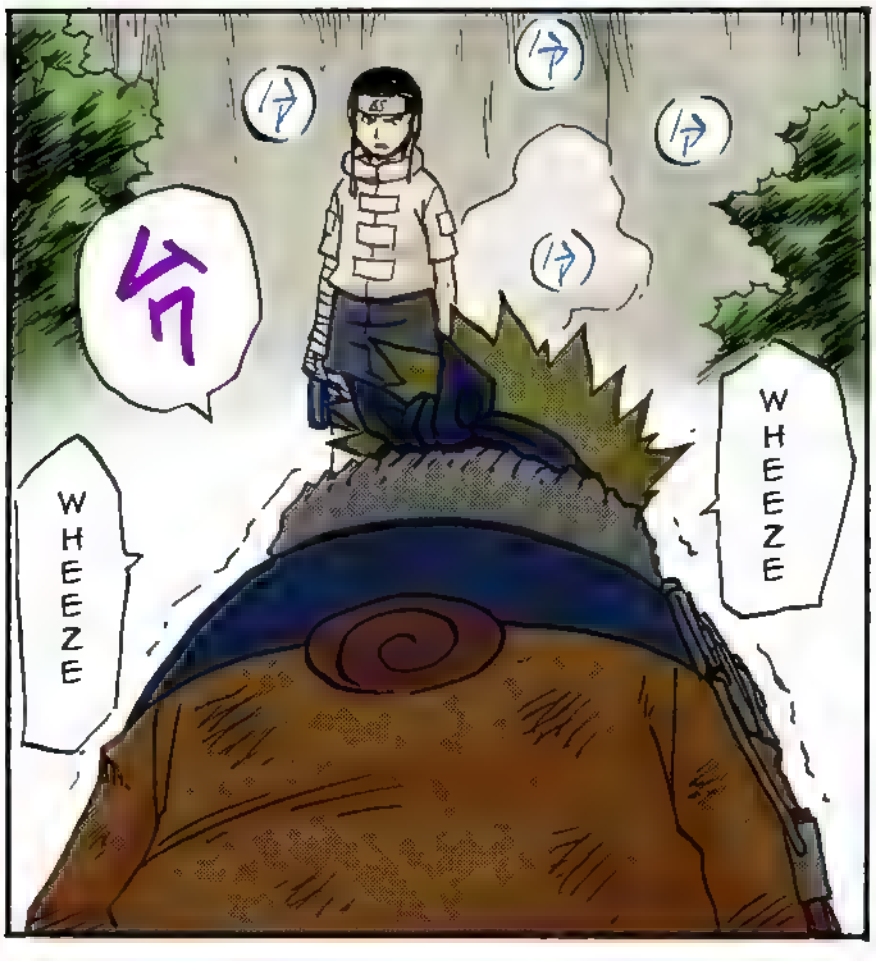
DARN IT!


.....!

OH!


!

HUH?


WHEEZE
WHEEZE

WHAT?!
!

...I'M A SORE LOSER...!

I TOLD YOU...

GAGK

!

NO... NARUTO... YOU CAN'T GO ON...

HEY! YOU'RE COUGHING UP BLOOD!

NO WAY...

HE...

ALLOW ME...

!

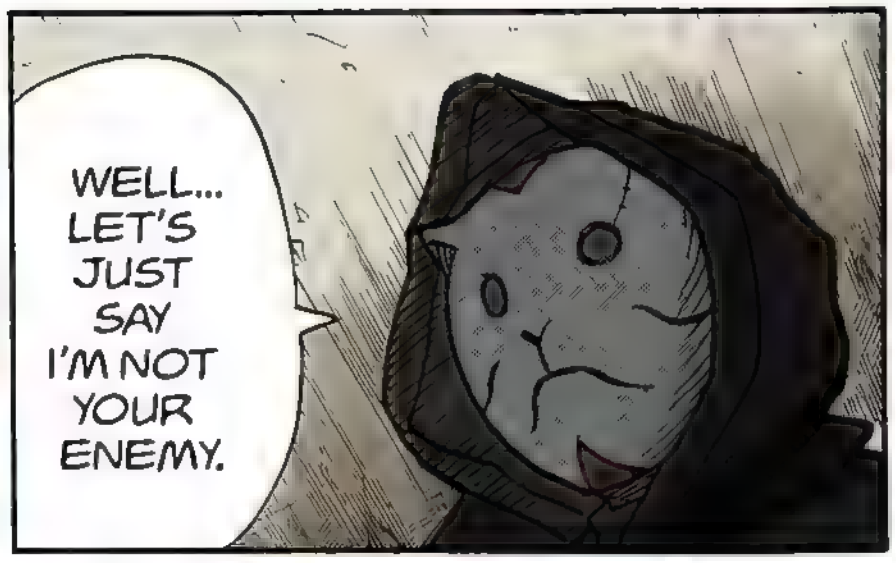
HINATA, YOU'RE STILL INJURED FROM YOUR OWN MATCH...!

WHAT'S WRONG?!

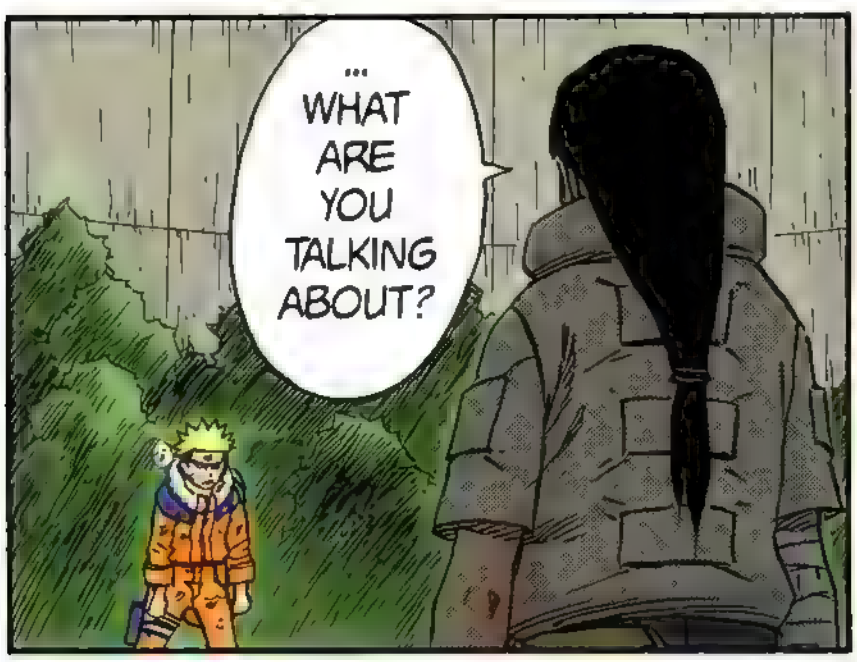
KOFF KOFF

HEY! HINATA!

WHO ARE YOU?
!


WELL... LET'S JUST SAY I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY.

SH-SHUT UP! I... I DO, ALL RIGHT?!
AND I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY GRUDGE AGAINST YOU, SO...
LISTEN, JUST GIVE UP, ALL RIGHT...? IF YOU KEEP GOING, IT'LL ONLY BE MORE OF THE SAME.


... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

.....

BLINK

AND WHEN YOU WERE UP AGAINST HINATA, WHO WAS FIGHTING SO HARD, YOU PLAYED THOSE HORRIBLE MIND-GAMES WITH HER...!

...I... I MEAN... YOU'RE SO STRONG, AND YOU... YOU ACT LIKE YOU KNOW EVERYTHING...

"MAIN BRANCH"... "CADET BRANCH"... I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT STUFF, BUT...

...YOU MOCKED HINATA... CALLING HER A FAILURE AND CLAIMING YOU COULD SEE HER FATE...!

THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

...A JERK WHO GOES AROUND CALLING PEOPLE FAILURES!!

...I COULD NEVER FORGIVE...

.....

.....

.....

!

ALL RIGHT... SINCE YOU INSIST, I'LL TELL YOU...

...FINE.

...ABOUT THE HATEFUL LEGACY OF THE HYUGA CLAN!

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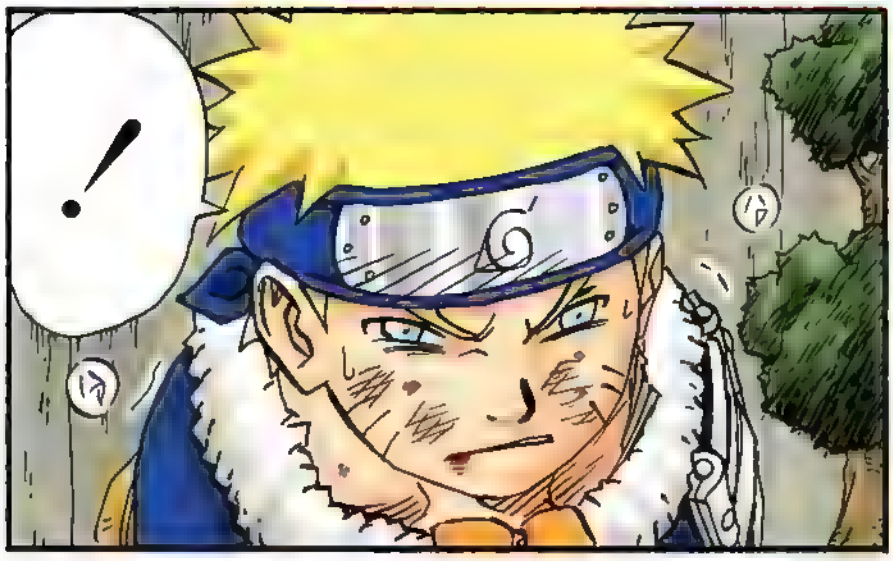
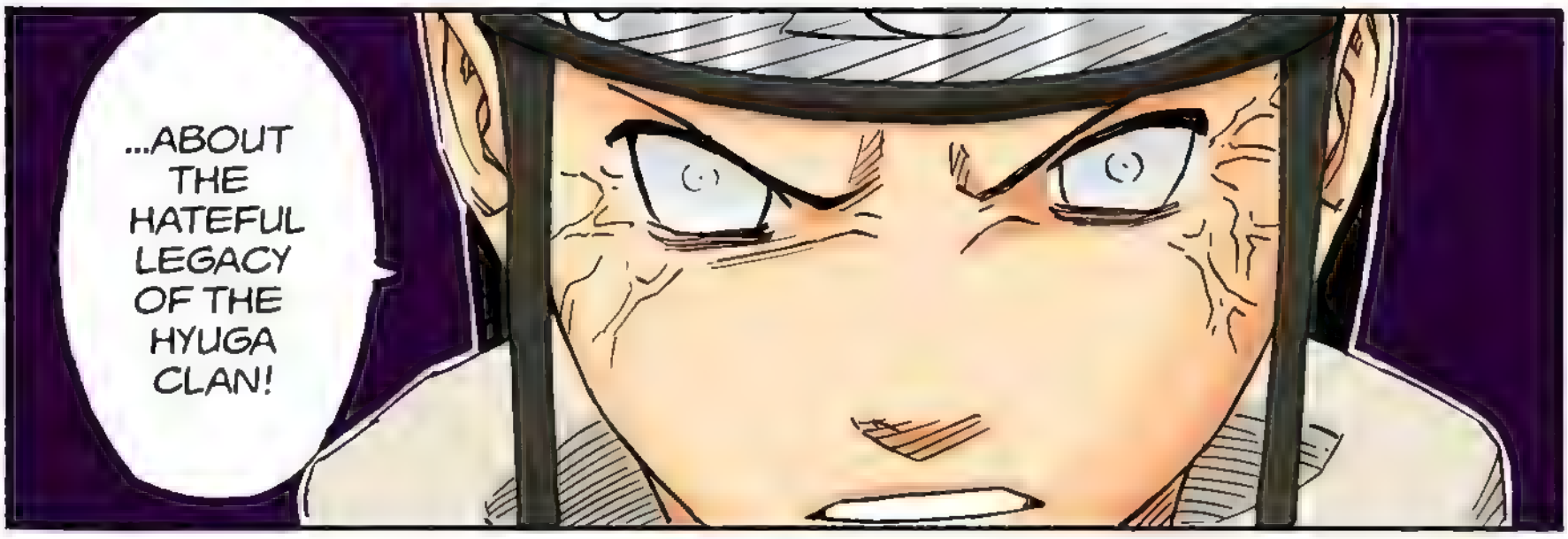
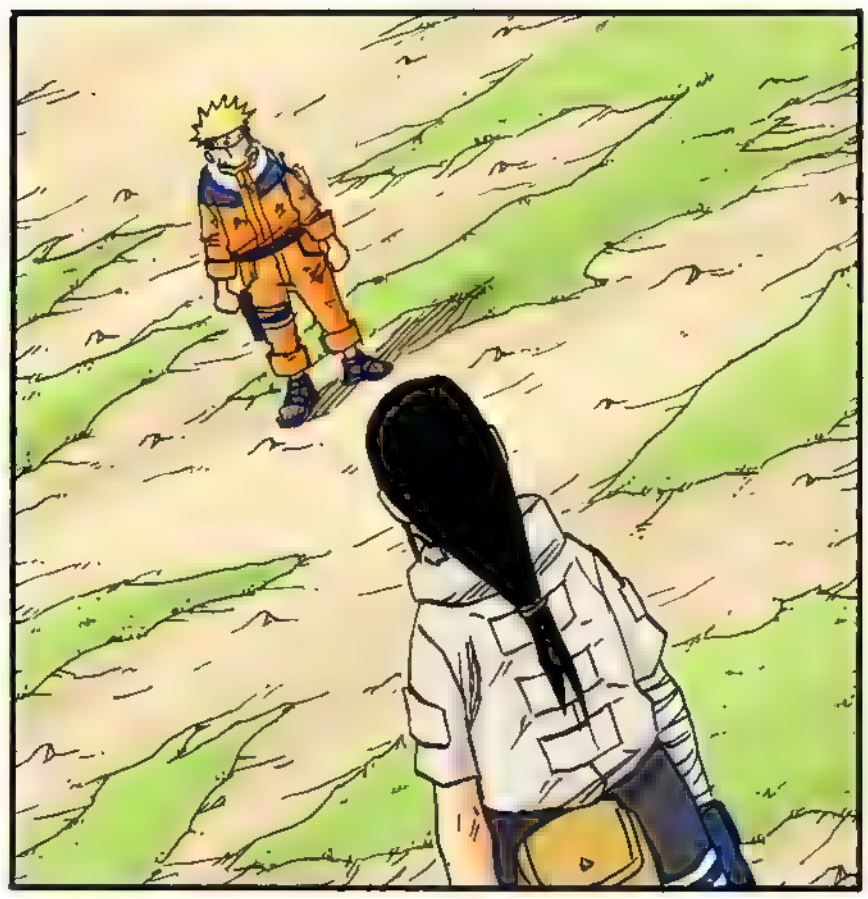
102 : THE CAGED BIRD!!







.....

RELAX, I'M A DOCTOR...

HEY...!

THERE'S A SECRET BIRTHRIGHT NINJUTSU PASSED DOWN...

...IN THE HYUGA MAIN BRANCH.

A CURSE MARK JUTSU...?

...A CURSE MARK JUTSU.

IT'S...

AND... IT IS PROOF THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE BOUND TO DESTINIES FROM WHICH THEY CANNOT ESCAPE!

THIS CURSE MARK REPRESENTS A "CAGED BIRD"...

!

!!?

WH- WHAT THE ...?!

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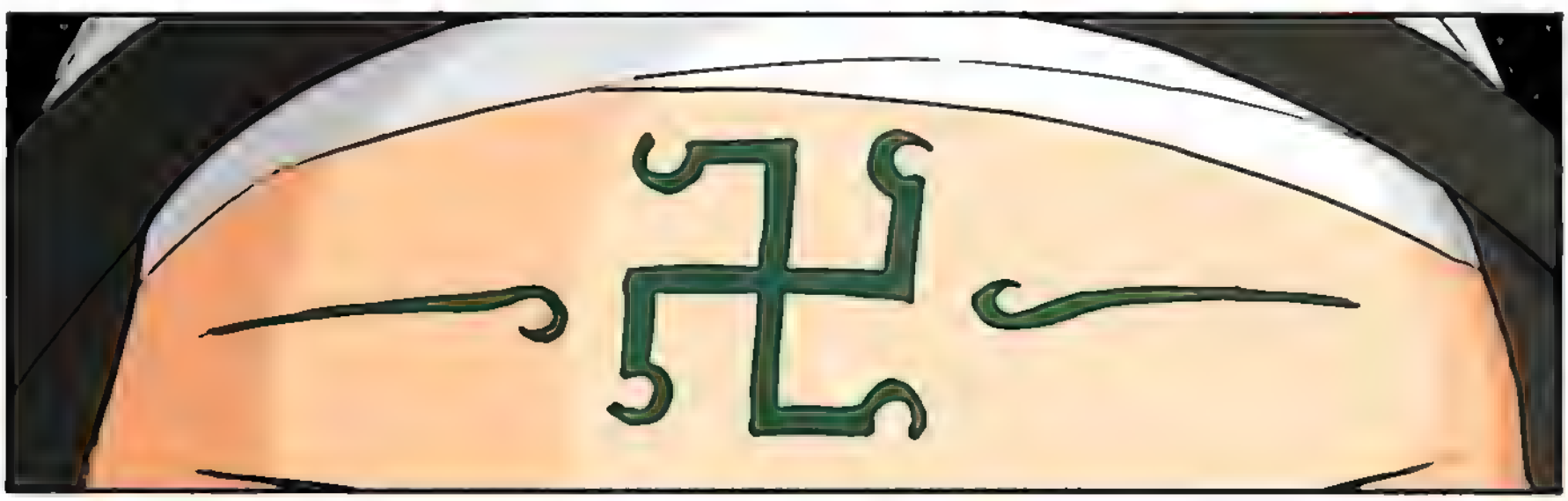
ナンバー

102：

THE CAGED BIRD!!



...TH-THAT'S THE MARK...?!

.....

.....

.....

THERE WAS A LAVISH CEREMONY IN HONOR OF THE SHINOBI RULER OF THE LAND OF CLOUDS.

KONOHA HAD LONG WAGED WAR AGAINST HIS NATION, BUT HE HAD COME TO SIGN A PACT OF ALLIANCE.

THAT DAY, A GRAND CELEBRATION WAS BEING THROWN IN KONOHA.

THIS ABOMINABLE MARK WAS BRANDED ONTO MY FOREHEAD USING THE CURSE MARK JUTSU...

...ONE DAY... WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD...

...THE DAY THAT THE MAIN BRANCH'S HEIR TURNED THREE.

COINCIDENTALLY, THAT DAY WAS ALSO...

IT WAS THE HYUGA CLAN!

!!?

...EXCEPT FOR ONE FAMILY...

EVERY SHINOBI IN KONOHA, FROM GENIN TO JÔNIN, WAS IN ATTENDANCE...

...WHICH WAS NOTICEABLY ABSENT!

IT WAS LADY HINATA'S THIRD BIRTHDAY!

.....

!!

WHILE MY FATHER, AS SECOND SON, WAS RELEGATED TO THE CADET BRANCH...

HOWEVER, LADY HINATA'S FATHER -- LORD HIASHI -- ENTERED THE WORLD FIRST, AND THUS WAS ELDEST SON... AND MEMBER OF THE MAIN BRANCH.

MY FATHER AND LADY HINATA'S FATHER OVER THERE...

...HYUGA HIZASHI AND LORD HYUGA HIASHI... WERE TWIN BROTHERS.

THANK YOU...

LADY HINATA IS NOW THREE... CONGRAT-ULATIONS.

HUH...?!

...WHAT'S THE MATTER, FATHER?

...OH, NO... IT'S NOTHING...

SHE'S A CUTE KID, FATHER..!

.....

.....

?

.....

WELL THEN... I'LL BE TAKING CHARGE OF NEJI. HIZASHI...

...YES, SIR.

...A MEMBER OF HYUGA'S CADET BRANCH!

WHEN THE HEIR OF THE MAIN BRANCH TURNED THREE YEARS OLD...

...I WAS BRANDED WITH THE CURSE MARK AND BECAME A "CAGED BIRD"...

THIS MARK ON MY FOREHEAD IS NO DECORA-TION...

SPLITTING INTO MAIN BRANCH AND CADET BRANCH...

...WHAT IS IT FOR? AND WHAT DOES THAT WEIRD MARK MEAN?

...WHY DID THEY HAVE TO DO THAT...?

バシ

心頭滅却

心技一体

.....

.....

.....

YES, FATHER!

...IS TO PROTECT LADY HINATA... THE BLOOD OF THE HYUGA CLAN.

LISTEN CLOSELY, NEJI. YOUR PURPOSE IN LIFE...

FASTER! MOVE YOUR FEET!

...I SEE... BLOOD-LUST!!

HMPH!

!

FATHER! WHAT'S WRONG?!

AAARGH!!

GAAH!!

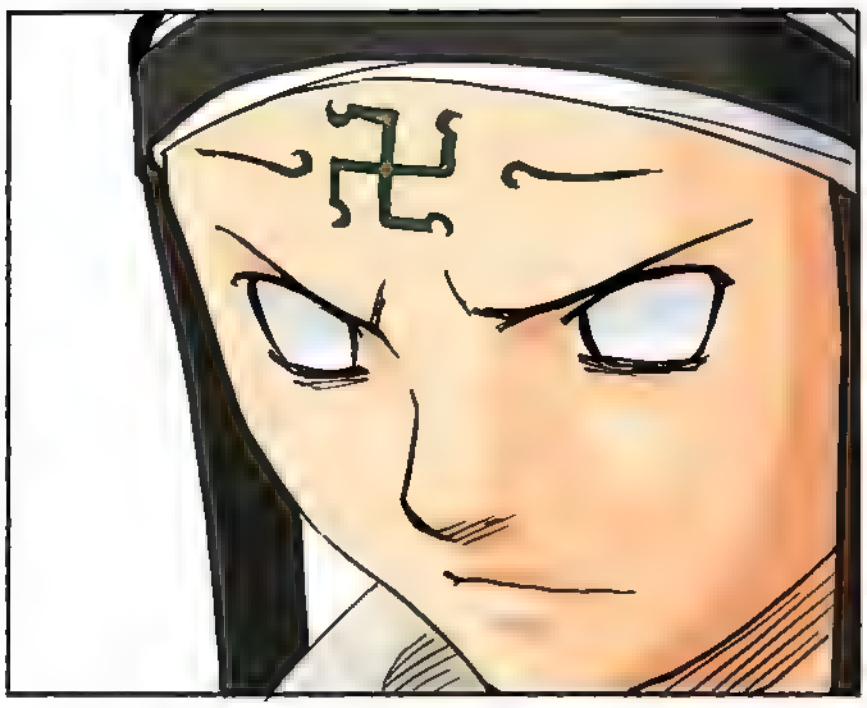
MY HEAD... AAAH!!

I WILL NOT TOLERATE THIS FOOLISH-NESS A SECOND TIME...

GO HOME NOW.

UGH... UNH...

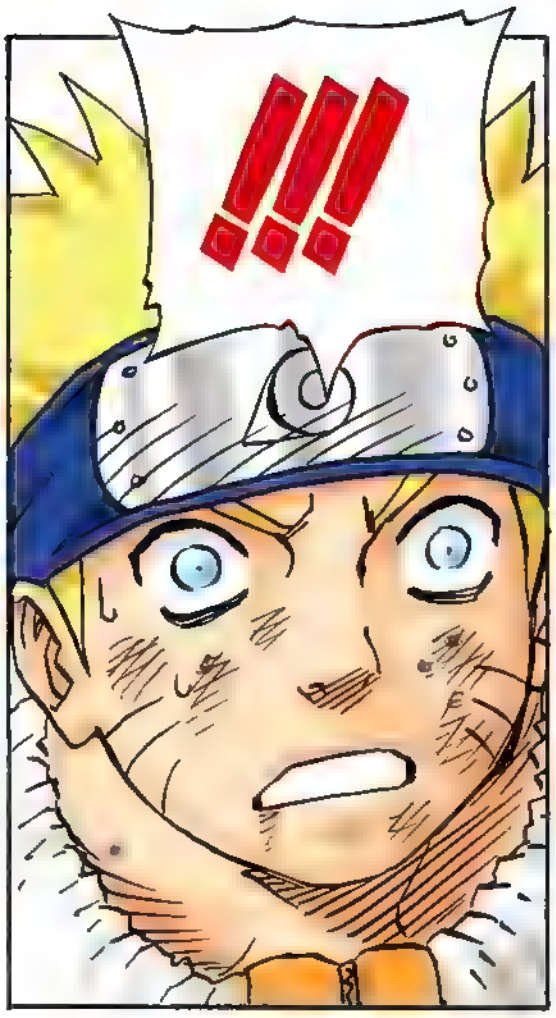
FATHER!!



THE SECRET TECHNIQUES OF THE MAIN BRANCH CAN EASILY DESTROY THE MINDS OF THOSE OF THE CADET BRANCH...

SO, OF COURSE, KILLING US IS A SIMPLE TASK.

THIS CURSE MARK SIGNIFIES AN ABSOLUTE THREAT OF DEATH IMPOSED BY THE MAIN BRANCH UPON THE CADET BRANCH...!



...AFTER THE SECRET OF THE BYAKUGAN HAS BEEN SEALED AWAY...!!

AND THIS CURSE MARK ONLY FADES AFTER DEATH...

SO... THIS CURSE MARK WAS CREATED TO ENSURE THAT THE CADET BRANCH WOULD LIVE FOR ONE PURPOSE ONLY...

...TO SERVE AND SHIELD THE MAIN BRANCH... AND NEVER DISOBEY THEM...

COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO GAIN THE SECRET OF SUCH UNIQUE ABILITIES.

THE HYUGA CLAN POSSESSES ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED KEKKEI GENKAI.

IT'S A BRILLIANT, EFFICIENT SET-UP.

...AND TO ETERNALLY PROTECT THE BYAKUGAN... THE BLOODLINE TRAIT OF THE HYUGA CLAN.

...AND THEN...

...THE INCIDENT OCCURRED.

.....!!

.....

HEH HEH...

!!!

MY FATHER WAS MURDERED BY THE MAIN BRANCH.

WHAT?!

...AND KILLED THE PERPE-TRATOR.

LORD HIASHI RUSHED TO THE SCENE IMMEDI-ATELY...

ONE NIGHT... SOMEONE TRIED TO KIDNAP LADY HINATA.

...THAT MASKED BANDIT WAS...?

AND WHOM DO YOU SUPPOSE...

IT WAS...

.....?

...WITH WHOM WE HAD JUST SIGNED THE ALLIANCE TREATY.

...THE SHINOBI RULER OF THE LAND OF CLOUDS...

!!

HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH THEIR OWN NINJA GOT HIMSELF CAUGHT AND KILLED IN THEIR FAILED PLOT...

IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THEY HAD BEEN AFTER THE SECRET OF THE BYAKUGAN FROM THE VERY BEGINNING...

KONOHA MADE A BACKROOM BARGAIN WITH CLOUD.

BUT... EAGER TO AVOID BATTLE... AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED.

OF COURSE, THINGS FELL APART BETWEEN KONOHA AND CLOUD... THE WAR NEARLY RESUMED...

...THE LAND OF CLOUDS CLAIMED KONOHA HAD BREACHED THE CONTRACT AND BEGAN MAKING UNREASON-ABLE DEMANDS...

...AND CARRIER OF THE BYAKUGAN, THE BLOODLINE TRAIT OF HIS CLAN.

CLOUD DEMANDED THE CORPSE OF LORD HIASHI, HEAD OF THE HYUGA MAIN BRANCH...

AND KONOHA ACCEPTED THAT CONDITION.

BARGAIN...?

HUH?! BUT FATHER...

.....!

WAR WAS SAFELY AVERTED...

.....

.....

...HE WAS MURDERED TO SERVE AS HYUGA HIASHI'S BODY DOUBLE!

...THANKS TO MY FATHER, WHO WAS SACRIFICED TO PROTECT THE MAIN BRANCH...

THE ONLY WAY TO ESCAPE THIS ABOMINABLE CURSE MARK...

...IS TO DIE.

.....!

HEH...

...SEALED EACH OF THEIR FATES FOREVER.

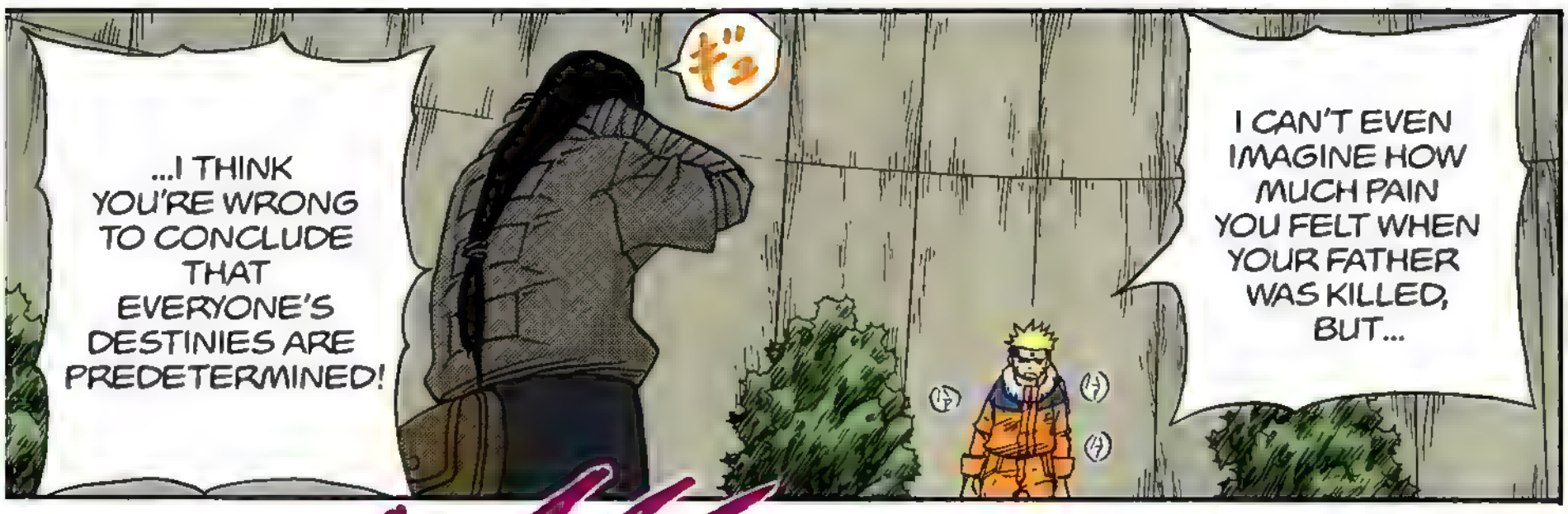
...THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING BORN FIRST AND BEING BORN SECOND...

EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE IDENTICAL TWINS WITH PRACTICALLY EQUIVALENT STRENGTH...

AND SO... IN THIS MATCH, TOO... THE MOMENT I WAS SELECTED AS YOUR OPPONENT, YOUR FATE WAS SEALED AS WELL.

.....

ナンバー
103：THE FAILURE!!


...I THINK YOU'RE WRONG TO CONCLUDE THAT EVERYONE'S DESTINIES ARE PREDETERMINED!
ガコ
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW MUCH PAIN YOU FELT WHEN YOUR FATHER WAS KILLED, BUT...

ナンバー

103：

THE FAILURE!!

PROCTOR.. WE'RE FINISHED HERE.

GAH!

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WHAT A FAILURE...

HMPH...

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...D... DON'T YOU TURN YOUR BACK...

HEH... I THINK I'VE HEARD THAT LINE BEFORE...

I NEVER.. GO BACK ON MY WORD...

GAGK

I WON'T RUN AWAY...

NARUTO...

WHAT A JOKE... STOP TRYING TO LECTURE ALL OF US, AS IF YOU KNOW **ANYTHING!**

I WON'T LOSE TO SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES IN RESIGNING HIMSELF TO FATE...!

I REFUSE TO BE DEFEATED BY A COWARD LIKE YOU...

EVERYONE IS BORN SHOULDERING A DESTINY THAT CANNOT BE DEFIED.

...I WISH YOU COULD HAVE BEEN BORN INTO THE MAIN BRANCH..

...MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, YOU'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH THE GENIUS OF THE HYUGA CLAN...

NEJI... YOU...

HOW COULD YOU UNDERSTAND ANYTHING ABOUT MY FATE... ABOUT BEARING AN INDELIBLE, INESCAPABLE CURSE?!

ACTUALLY...

I UNDERSTAND IT PRETTY WELL...

JERK!

SO WHAT?

AND...?

...YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO'S "SPECIAL," YOU KNOW!

HMPH!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO QUIT LECTURING...

SHE'S TRYING SO HARD TO CHANGE HERSELF... TO EARN RESPECT...

THAT'S WHY SHE HUNG IN THERE DURING THAT FIGHT WITH YOU, EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS COUGHING UP BLOOD!

.....!

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S IN THE MAIN BRANCH, HINATA HAS BEEN SUFFERING JUST AS MUCH AS YOU!

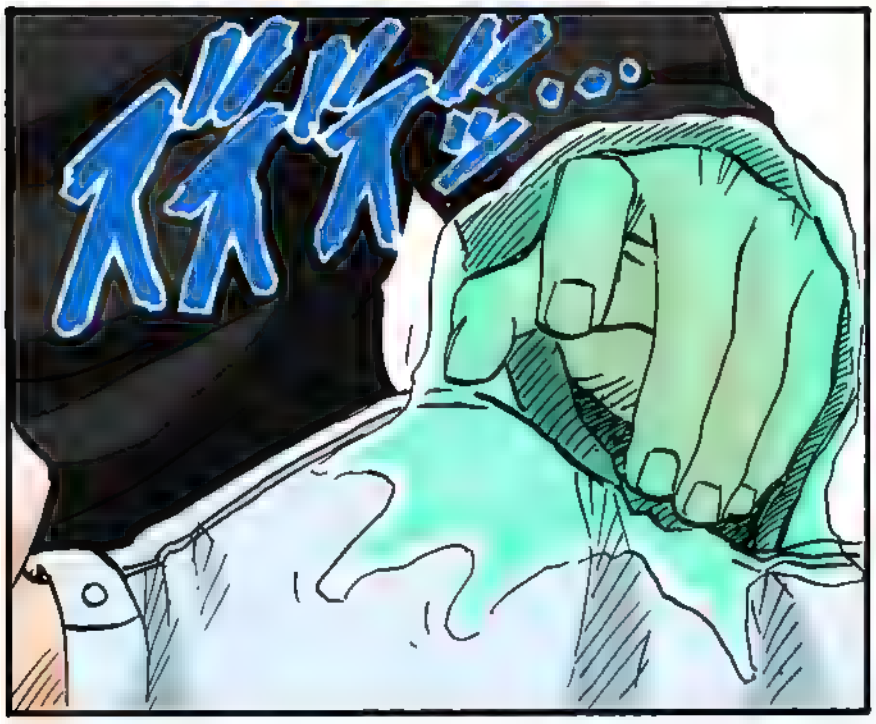
TWITCH

!!!

THE CADET BRANCH IS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT THE MAIN BRANCH, BUT YOU USED THE EXAM AS AN EXCUSE TO BEAT UP HINATA...

IT SURE SEEMS LIKE YOU WERE TRYING TO DEFY YOUR FATE, TOO!

AND YOU...!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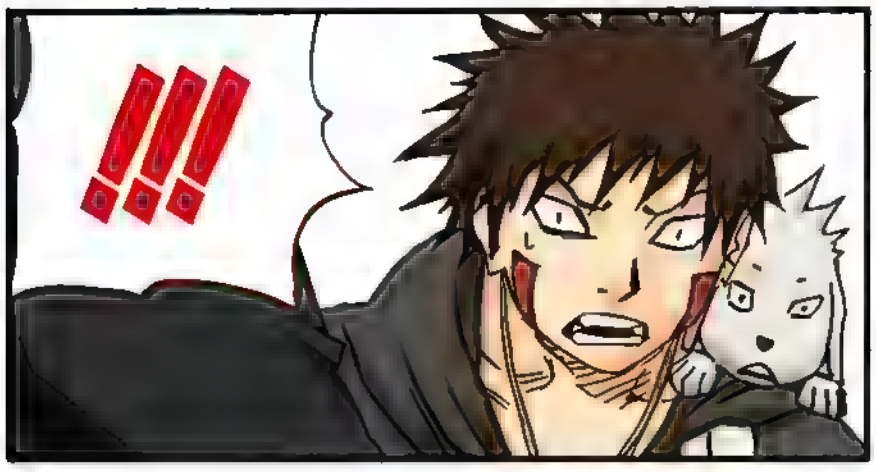
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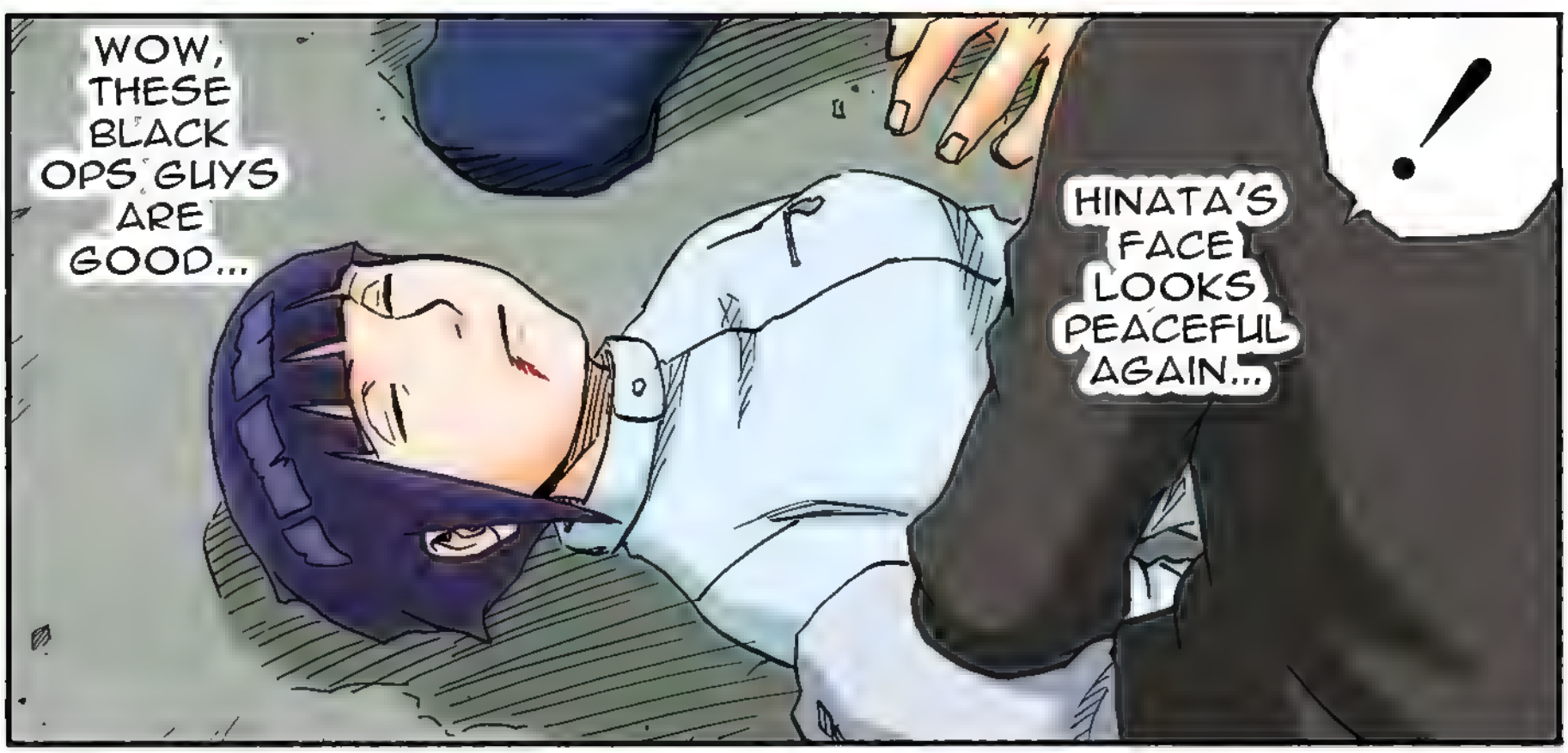
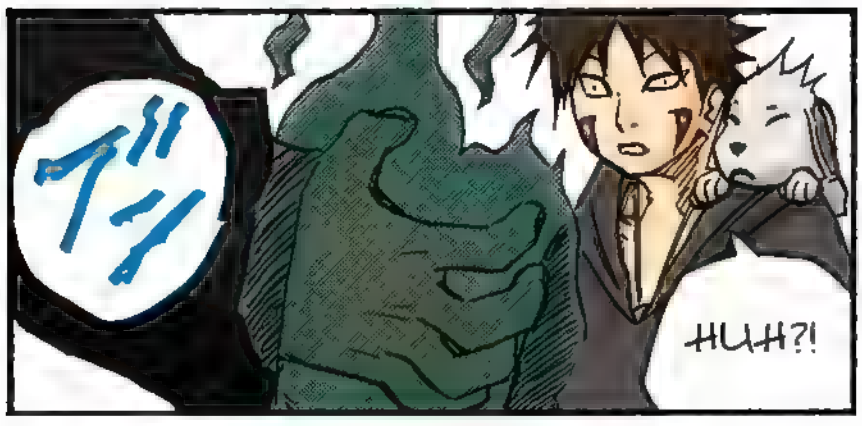

WOW, THESE BLACK OPS GUYS ARE GOOD...
HINATA'S FACE LOOKS PEACEFUL AGAIN...
!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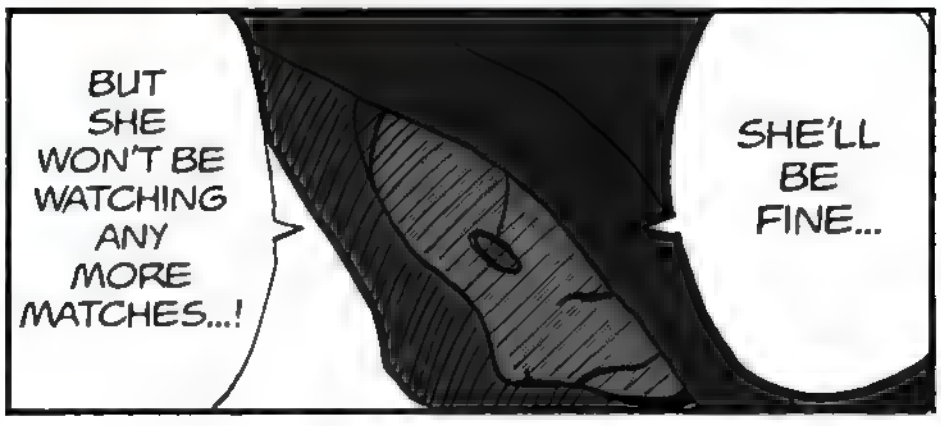
HUH?!


BUT SHE WON'T BE WATCHING ANY MORE MATCHES...!
SHE'LL BE FINE...

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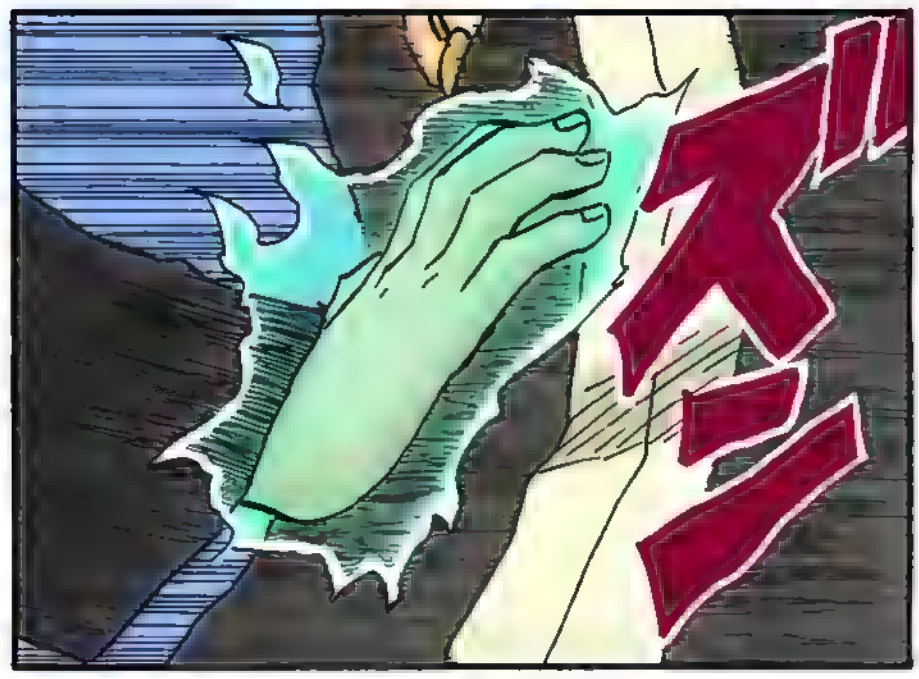
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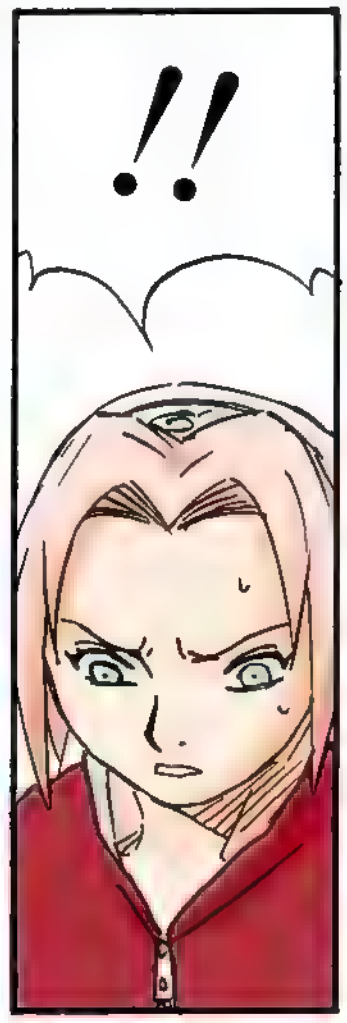
KOFF
KOFF

HOW ARE YOU PLANNING TO FIGHT? YOU CAN'T USE ANY CHAKRA.
HEH... I'VE BLOCKED 64 OF YOUR TENKETSU ALREADY...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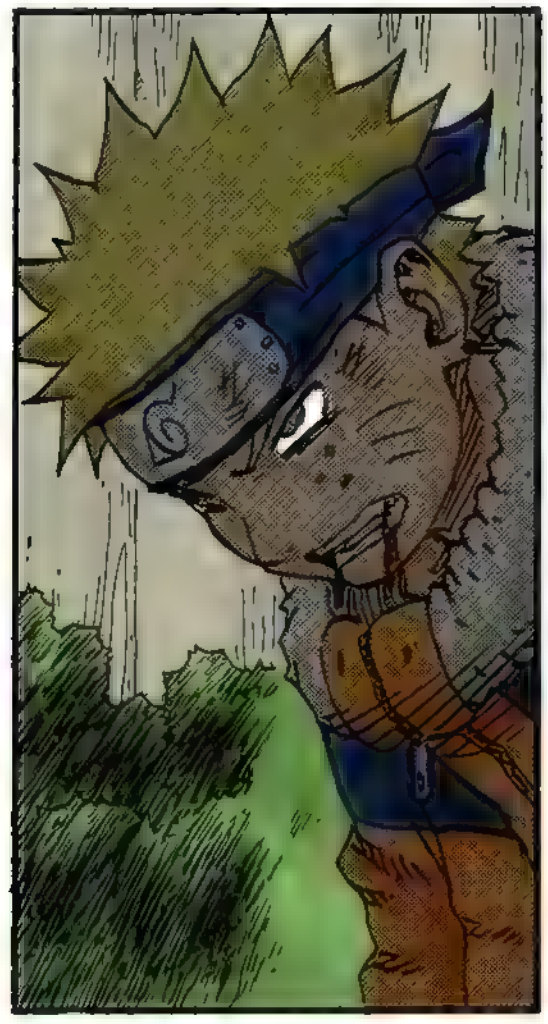


WELL...? ARE YOU ALL TALK, OR ARE YOU GOING TO TRY TO PROVE YOUR POINT?

SHUT UP! STOP ACTING ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, WITH YOUR ALL-SEEING BYAKUGAN!

WHEN WE'RE THROUGH, YOU'LL END UP JUST LIKE LADY HINATA!

ビキィ

BY KICKING YOUR BUTT!

SURE! I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU!

CRAP! I'M TALKING A BIG GAME, BUT I CAN'T FEEL MY CHAKRA AT ALL...

IT'S JUST LIKE THE TIMES I USED UP ALL OF MY CHAKRA DURING TRAINING!

.....

.....

YOU'VE GOT TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAKRA...

OH!!

THE FOX CHAKRA ...

...THAT'S RIGHT.

THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY TO DRAW ON THE GIGANTIC OTHER CHAKRA THAT'S BEEN SLEEPING INSIDE YOU ALL YOUR LIFE.

アッ

HEY, FOX...

LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH!!

SHEESH!

FEH...

FEEL FREE TO STOP ME IF YOU HAVE TO.

I'M DONE TALKING.

PROCTOR... I'M GOING IN FOR THE KILL!

I VOW...

TO WIN!

HYAAAH!

I'VE PRESSED YOUR TENKETSU...

IT'S USE-LESS...

I'VE GOT TO!

HYAAH!

...RIGHT NOW... I CAN'T BEAR TO LOSE!

EVEN THOUGH HIS OPPONENT COULD VERY WELL BE ME! BUT EVEN IF IT'S YOU, NARUTO...! I'LL HAVE NO REGRETS!

THE PROSPECT OF SEEING A FAILURE DEFEAT A GENIUS THROUGH SHEER FORCE OF WILL... IT REALLY MAKES YOU LOOK FORWARD TO THE FINAL ROUNDS.

YOU SHOULD COME WATCH ME BLOW NEJI AWAY!

.....

WHY DO YOU KEEP TRYING SO HARD TO DEFY YOUR DESTINY?!

CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

NGH...

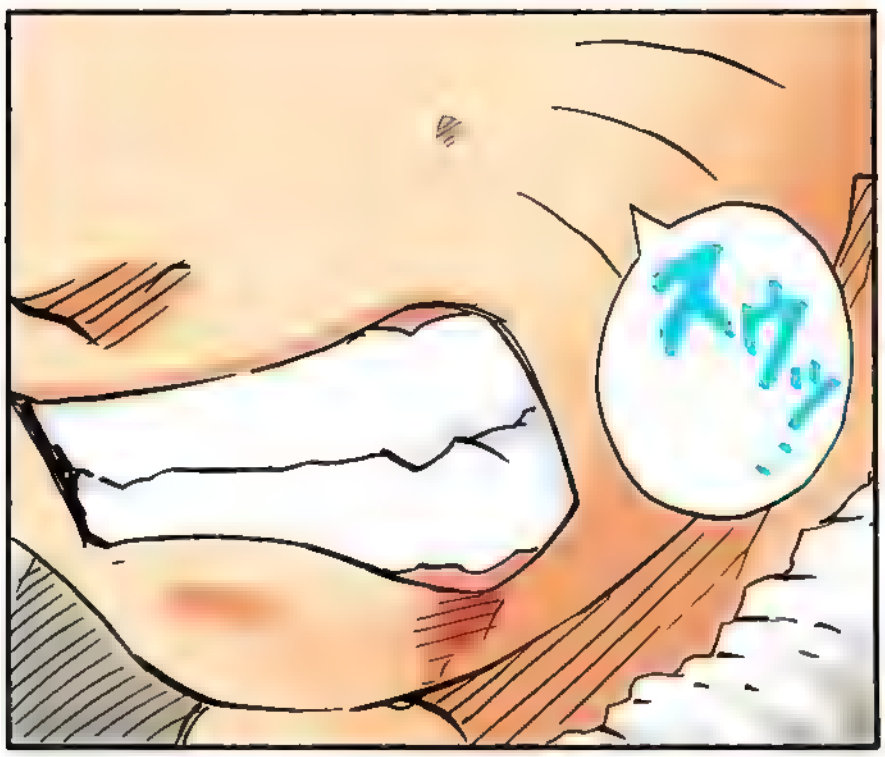
...I WAS A FAILURE!

BECAUSE SOMEBODY TOLD ME...

...!

HYAAAH!!

TCH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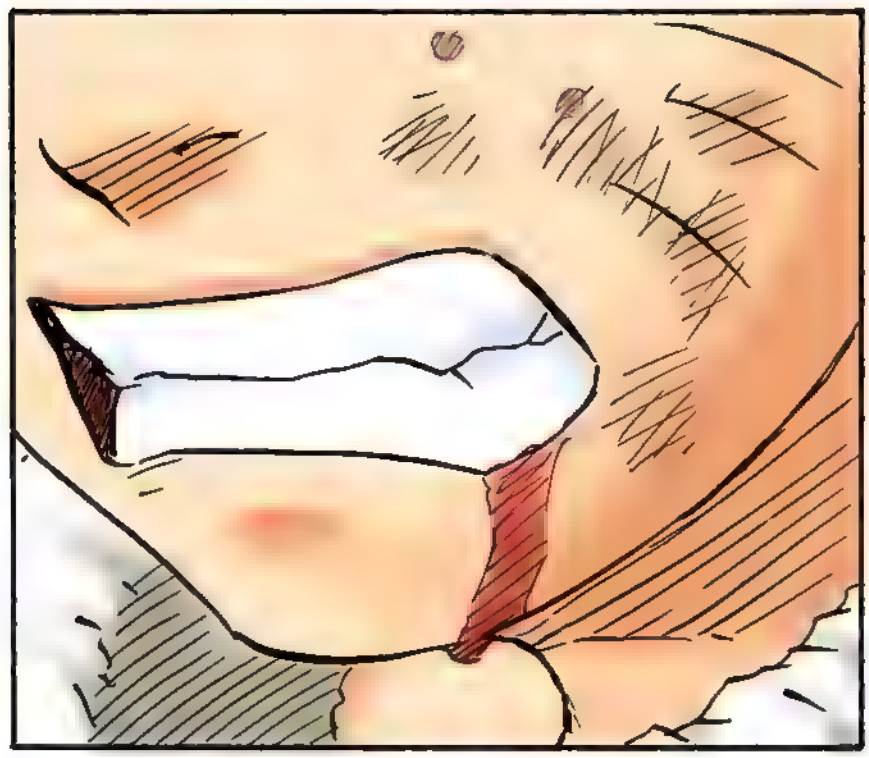
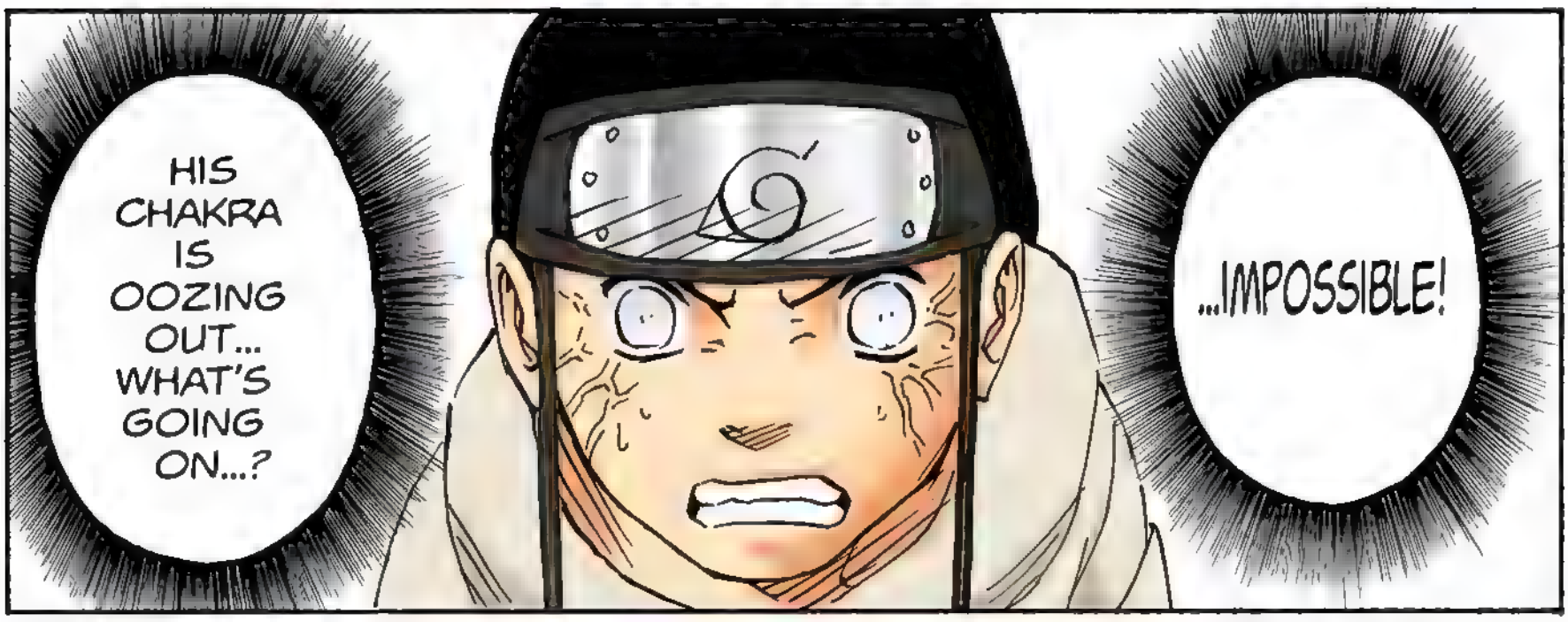
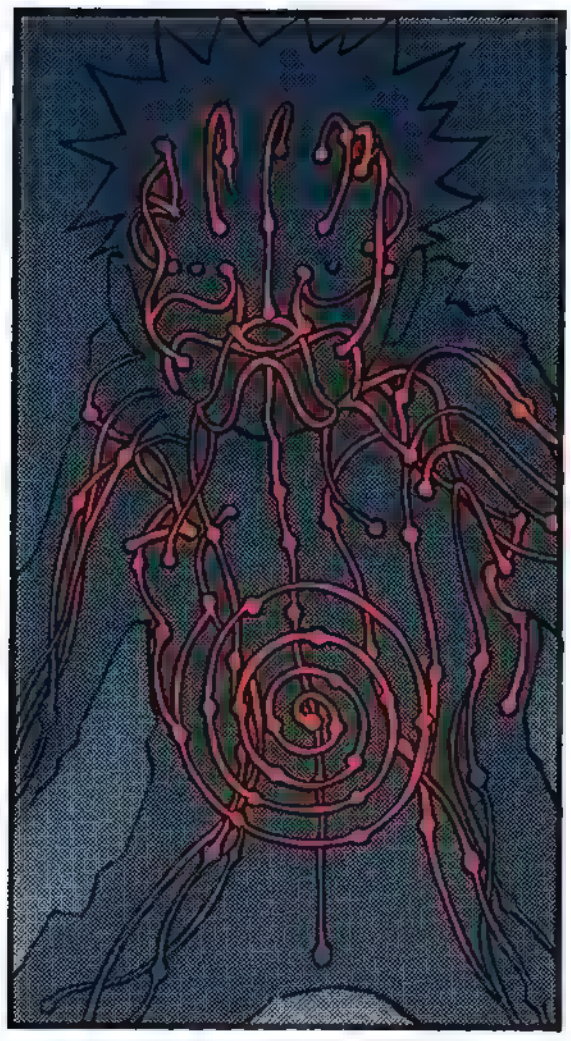
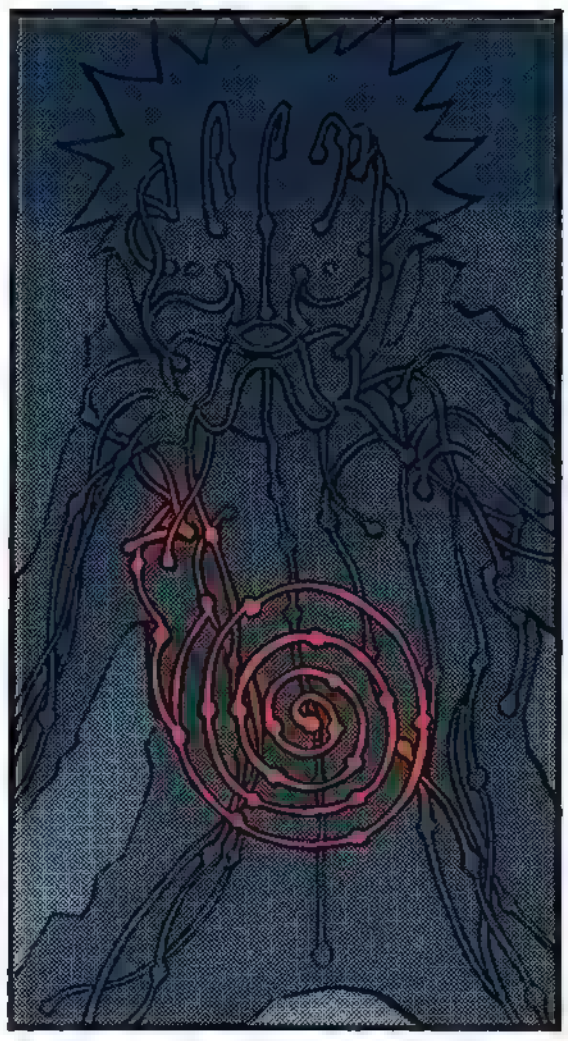
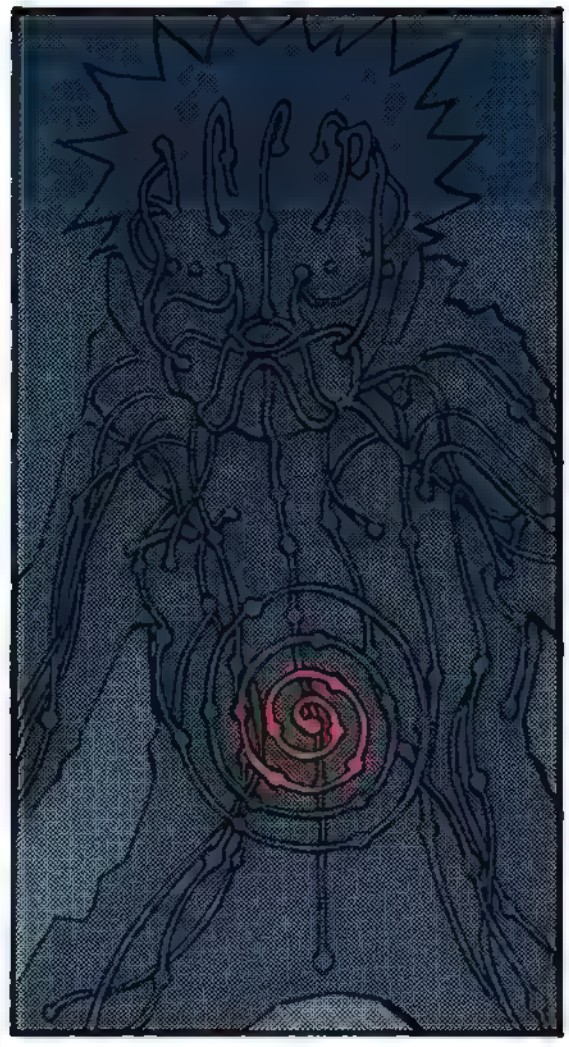
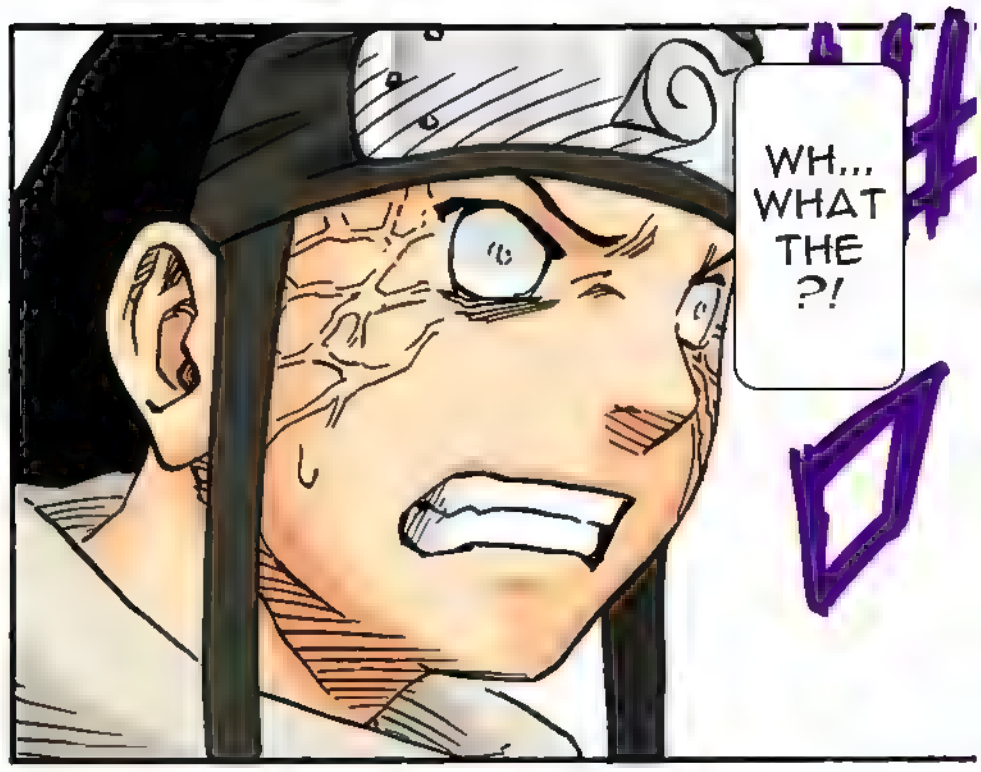


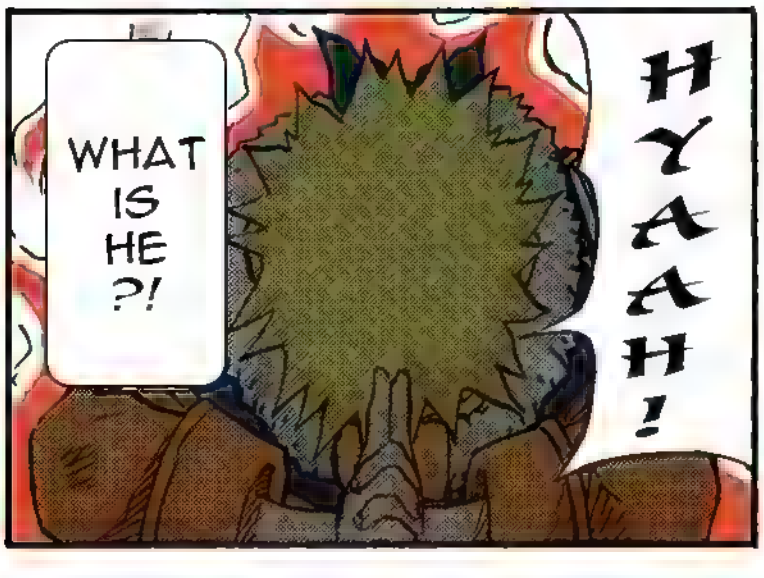

HIS CHAKRA IS OOZING OUT... WHAT'S GOING ON...?
...IMPOSSIBLE!








WH... WHAT THE ?!


WHAT IS HE ?!
HYAAH!

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IT CAN'T BE !!

N... NO WAY ...

...DON'T TELL ME... THIS CHAKRA...

.....!

風

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! HIS TENKETSU WERE PRESSED!!

.....

WHEN DID HE GAIN THE ABILITY TO ACCESS THE CHAKRA OF THE NINE-TAILED FOX?!

THAT CHAKRA... THERE'S NO MISTAKING IT.

.....

!!!
HERE I COME!!

ナンバー

104：

ヒュルルル

ファァァ

ファァァ

IS IT... CHAKRA?!

WHAT IS IT?!

...IT'S ENCIR-CLING HIM...

UNH!

THIS POWER... IT'S INCREDIBLE! IT'S SO MUCH STRONGER THAN WHEN I WAS TRAINING...

ゴゴゴゴ

!!

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I FEEL IT!!

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ROTATION!!

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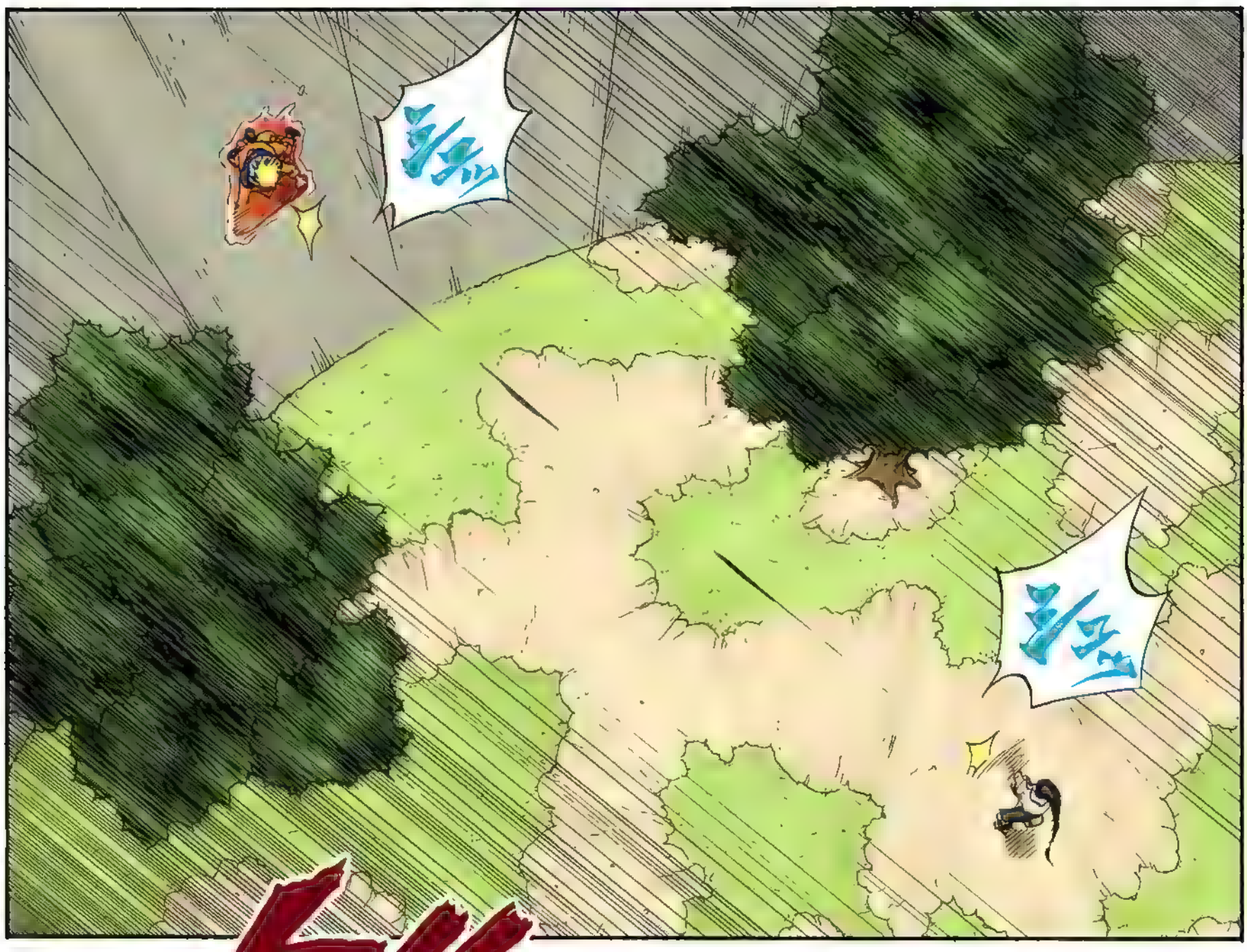
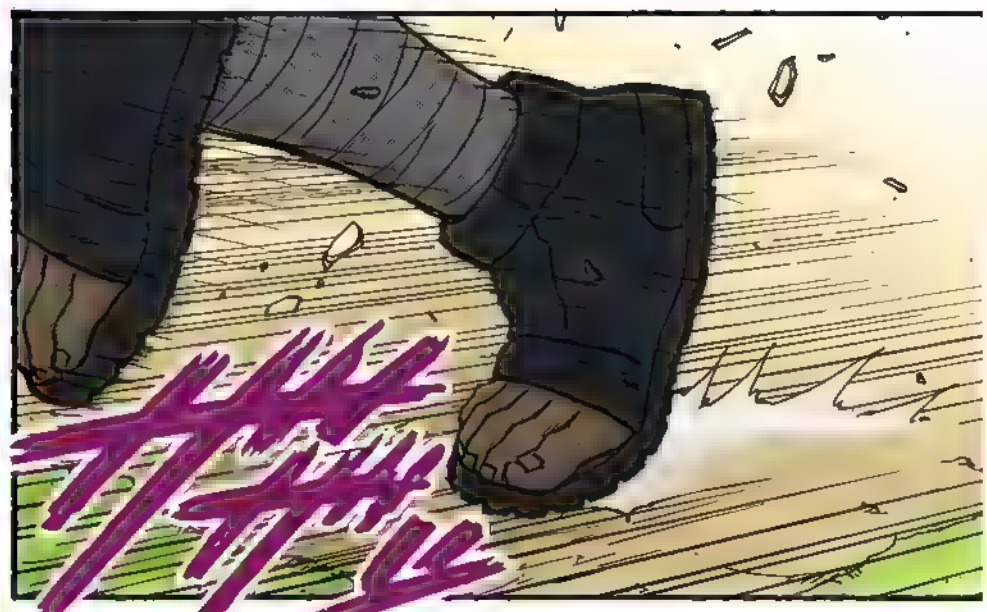




YOU LIKE CLOSE COMBAT, RIGHT?!
YOU...

HYAAH!!

ONLY A SELECT FEW SHINOBI ARE EVEN CONSI-DERED FOR HOKAGE.

WAKE UP AND FACE REALITY!

...YOU WANT TO BE HOKAGE, HUH?

I DON'T THINK THAT'S GONNA HAPPEN.

THOSE WHO WILL BECOME HOKAGE ARE BORN WITH THAT FATE. YOU CAN'T GET THERE BY TRYING... YOU HAVE TO BE PRE-SELECTED.

EACH PERSON'S LIFE CONSISTS ONLY OF BEING SWEPT ALONG IN THE INESCAPABLE CURRENT OF HIS DESTINY...

!!

NO! THE ROTA-ATION...

IF YOU THINK IT'S INESCAPABLE, FINE! THEN STOP FIGHTING IT ALREADY!!

LOOK, I MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE TRAGIC DESTINY OF THE HYUGA CLAN OR WHATEVER, BUT...

!

...I'LL CHANGE THE HYUGA CLAN!

WHEN I BECOME HOKAGE...

オルフェン
ボフル
ボフル

ボン

ドゴン

THE HYUGA KID... HE'S PROB-ABLY...

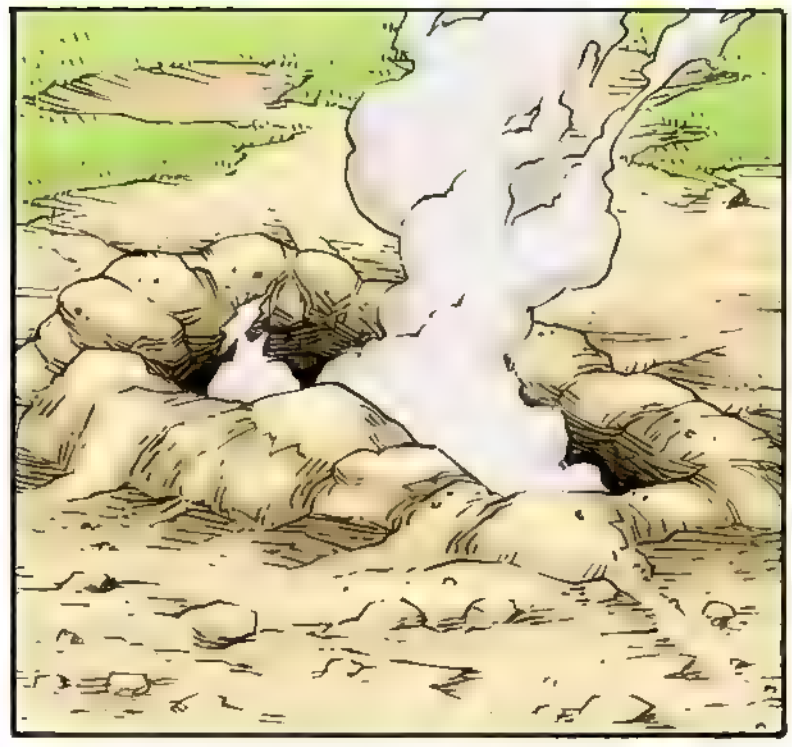
...WHAT AMAZING CHAKRA! THAT BOY'S STRENGTH... IT'S CRAZY!

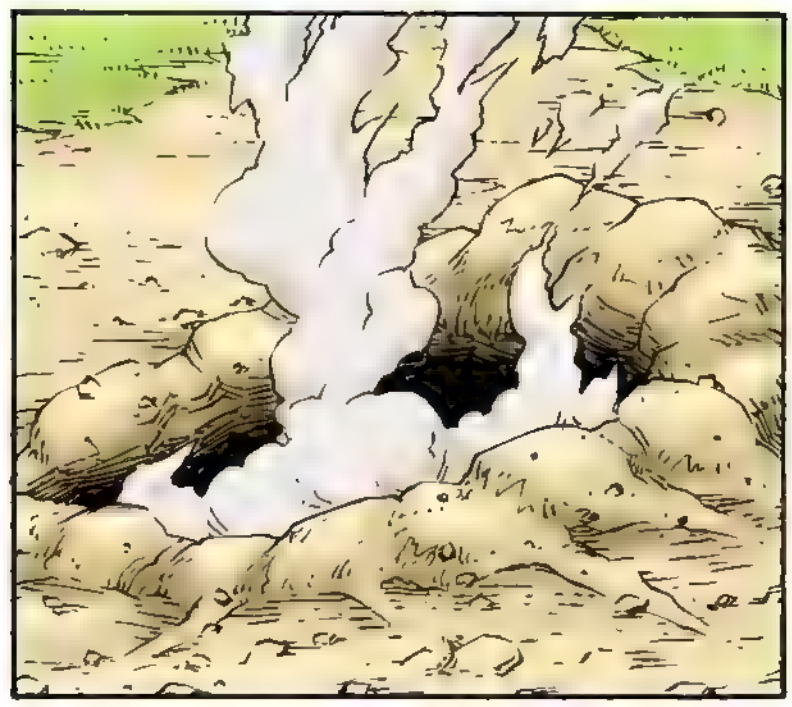
.....

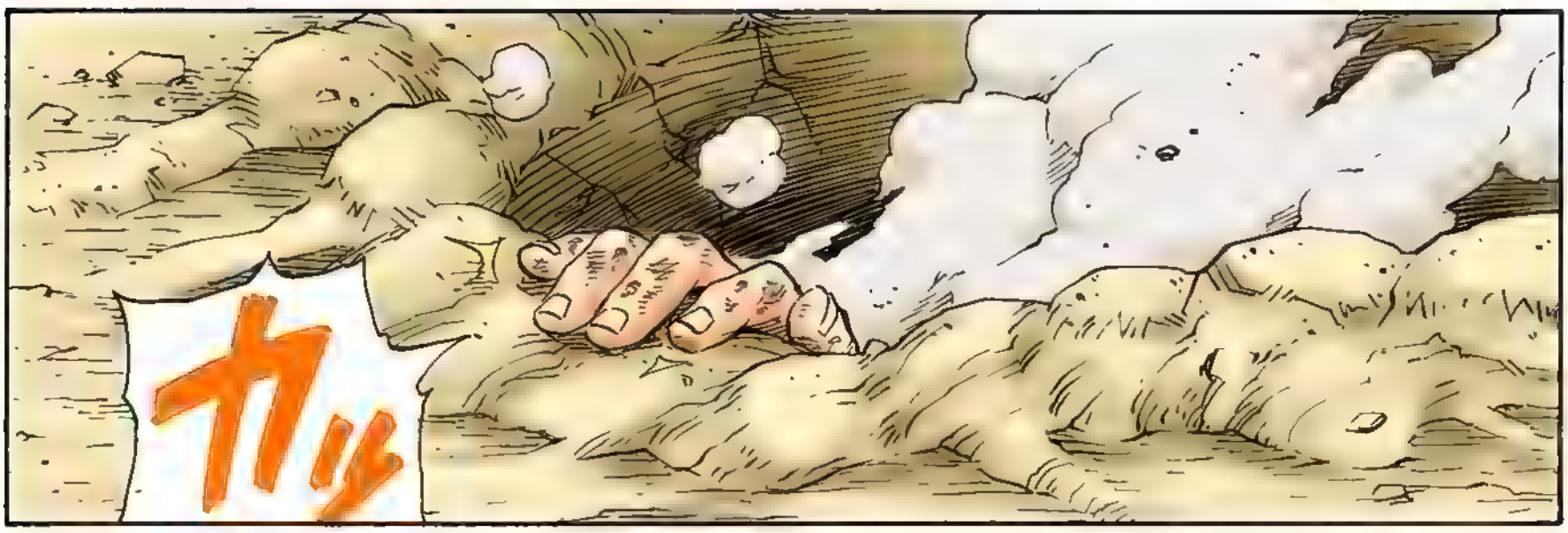
HM!

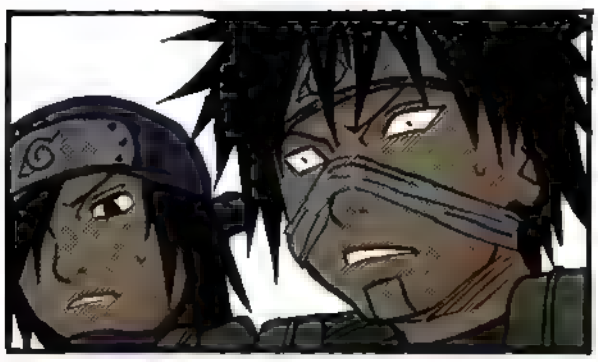
HEY! WHICH ONE'S NARUTO?!

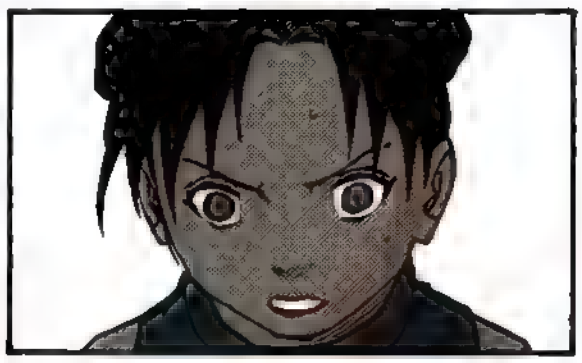
HOW WOULD I KNOW?!

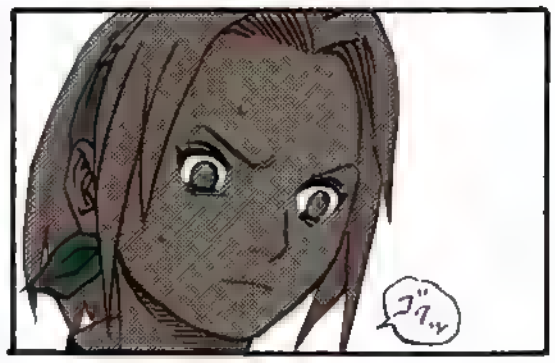


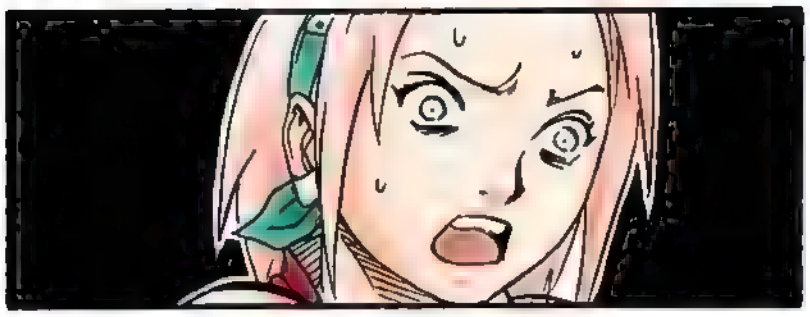


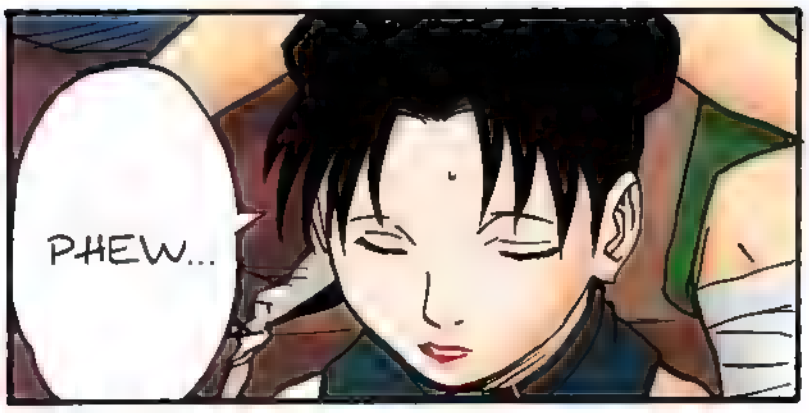








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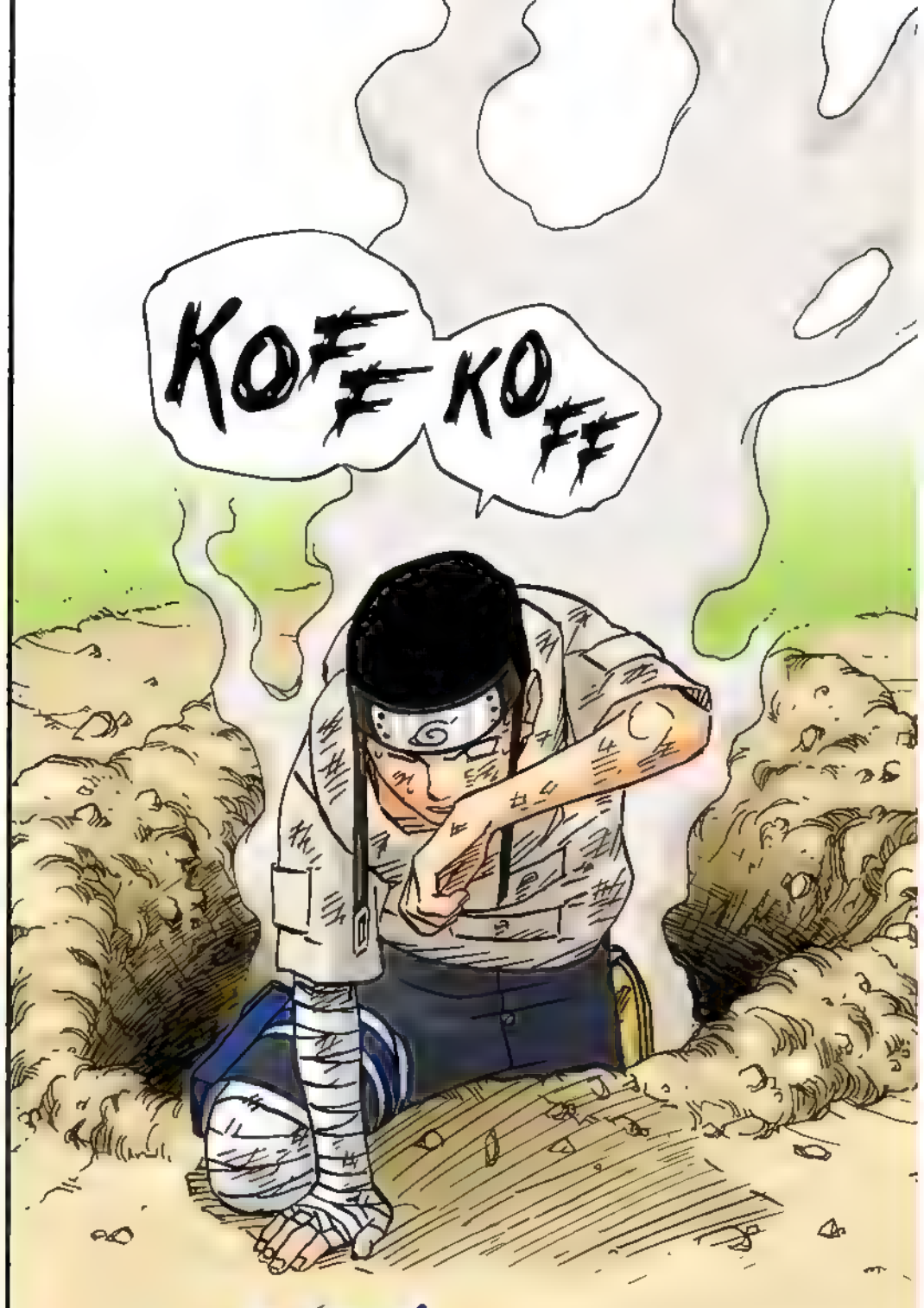
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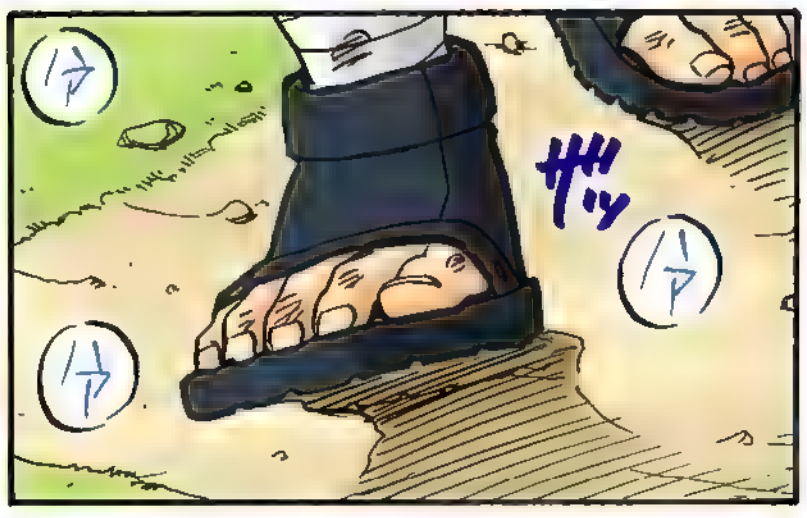
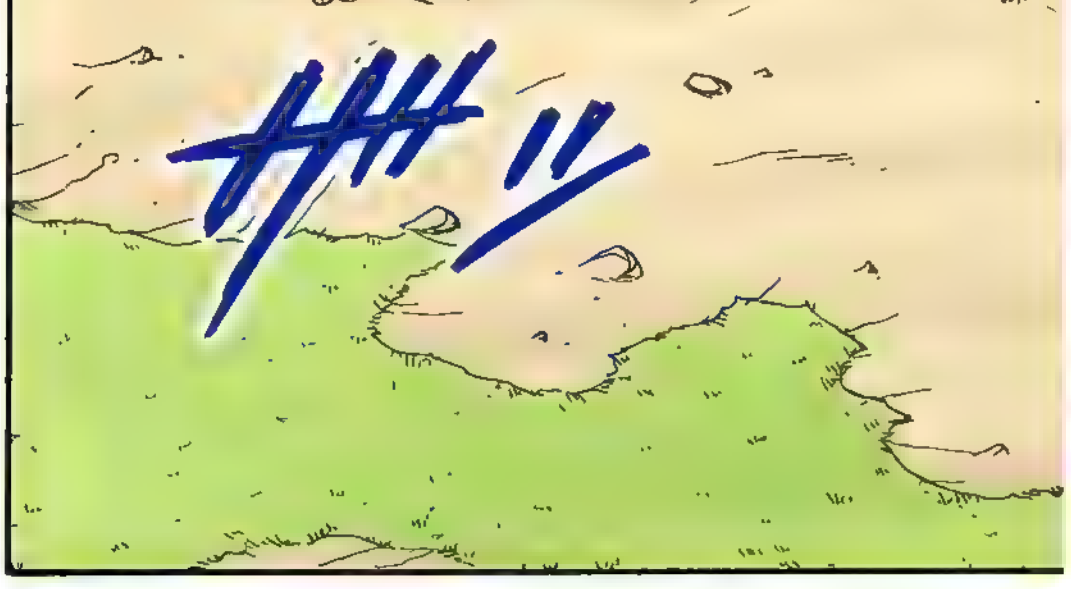
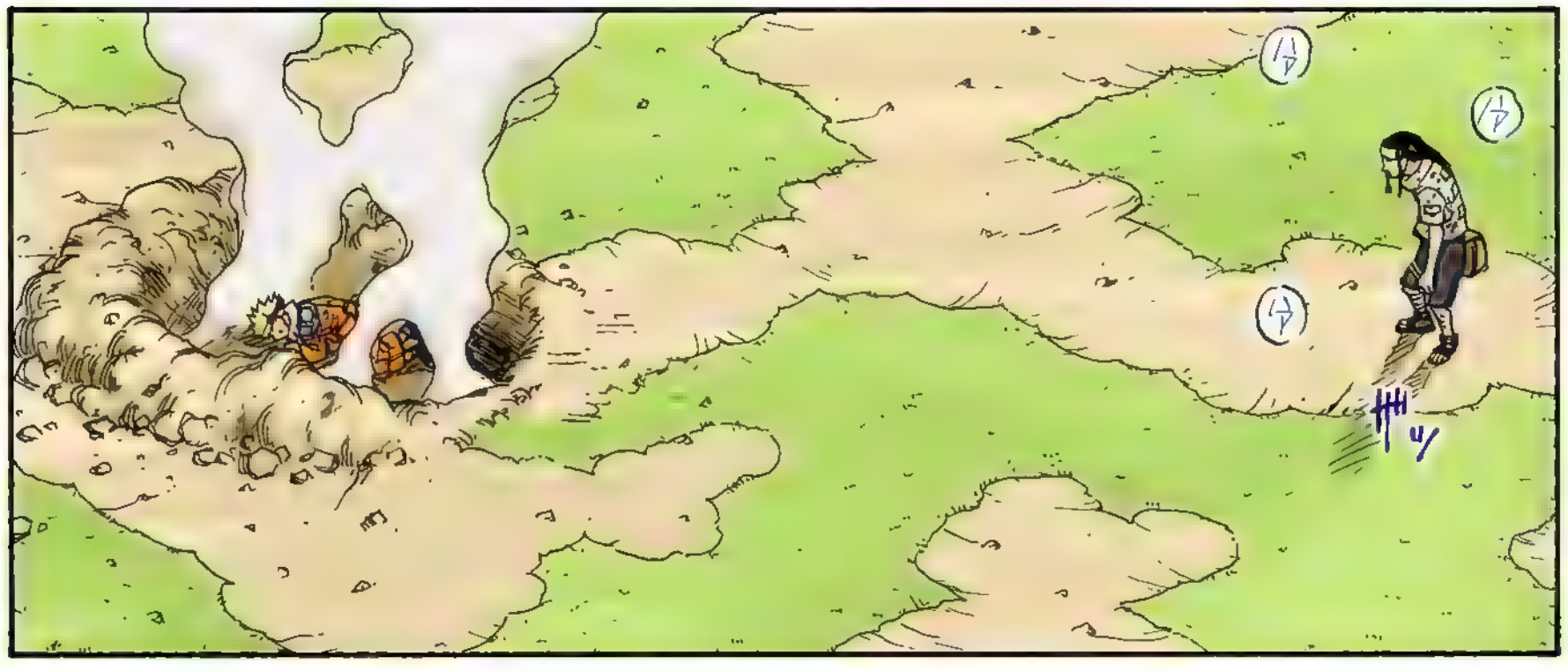






NO GENIN COULD DEFEAT NEJI...

BUT IT'S AMAZING THAT NARUTO HAS BEEN ABLE TO PUSH NEJI THIS FAR!

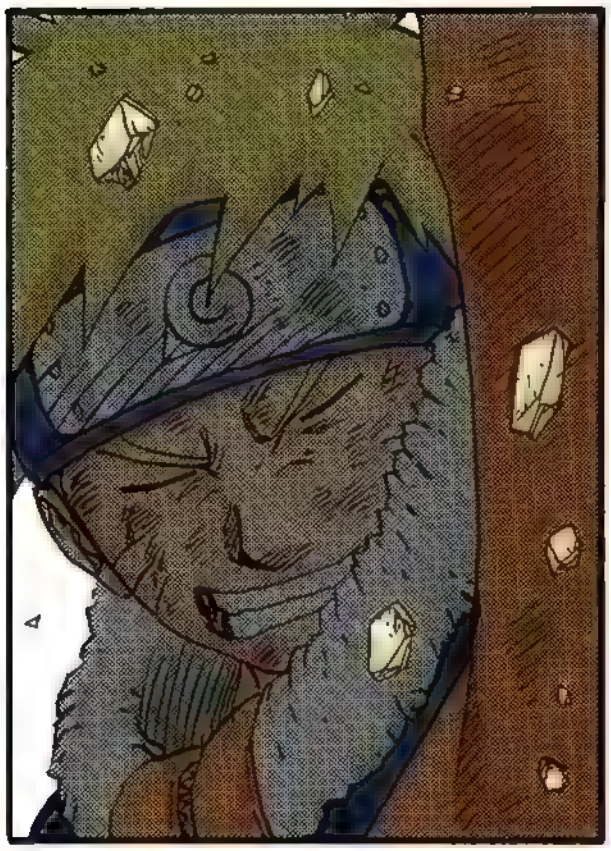
WHEN NEJI DOES HIS ROTATION, HE SPINS AROUND IN A CIRCLE, BLOCKING AND REPELLING HIS OPPONENT'S CHAKRA!

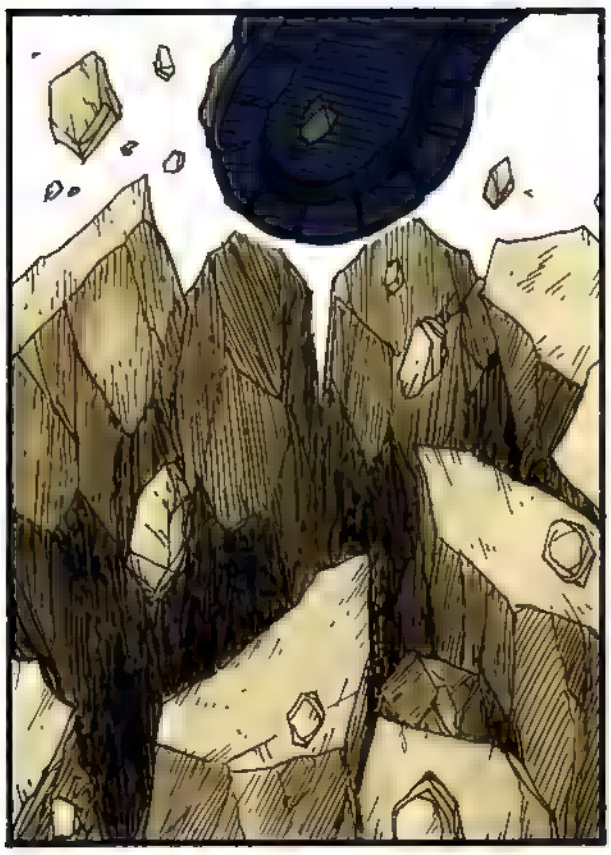
NARUTO CHARGED STRAIGHT AT NEJI... IT LOOKS LIKE HE SUSTAINED PRETTY SEVERE DAMAGE...

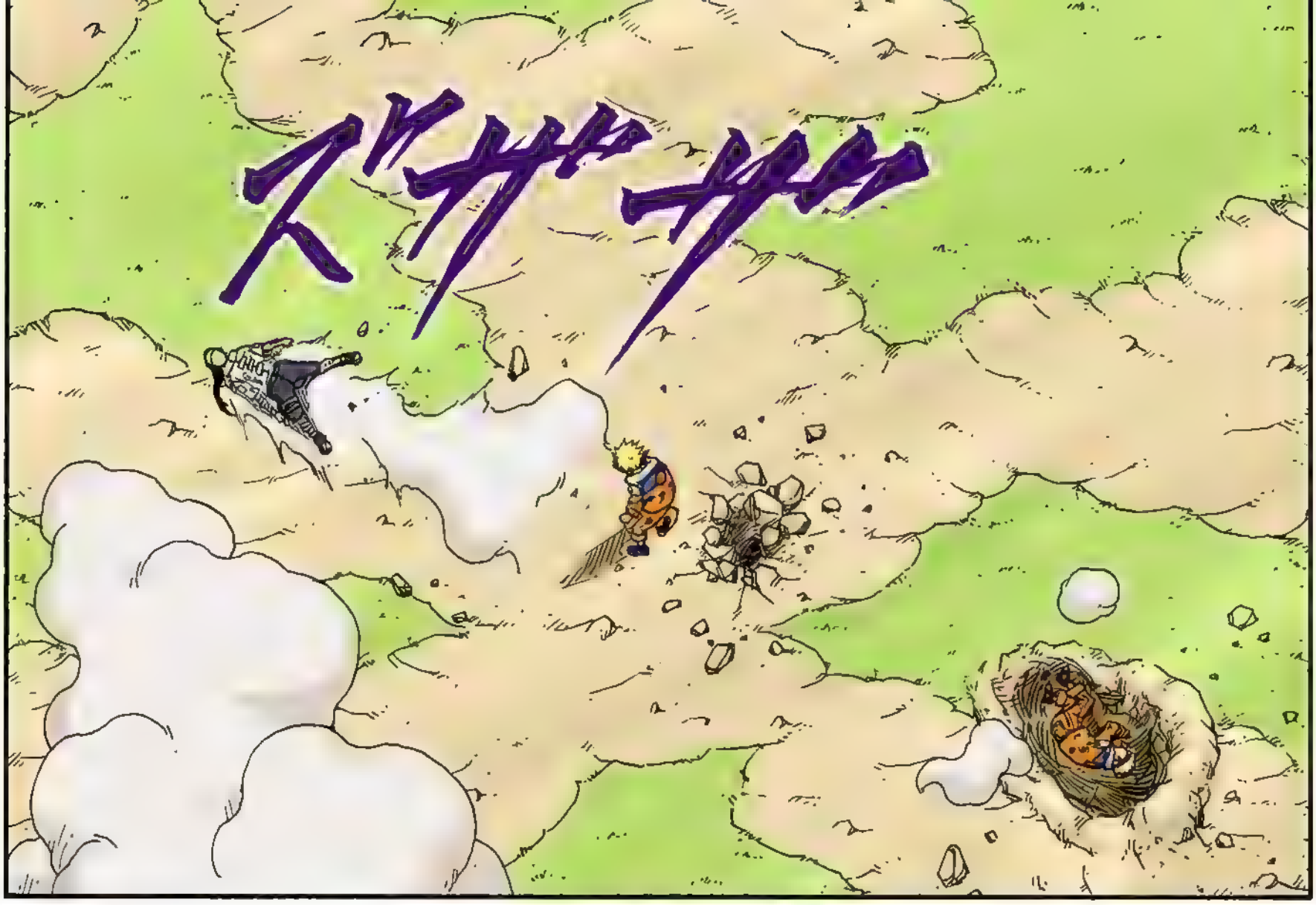
.....

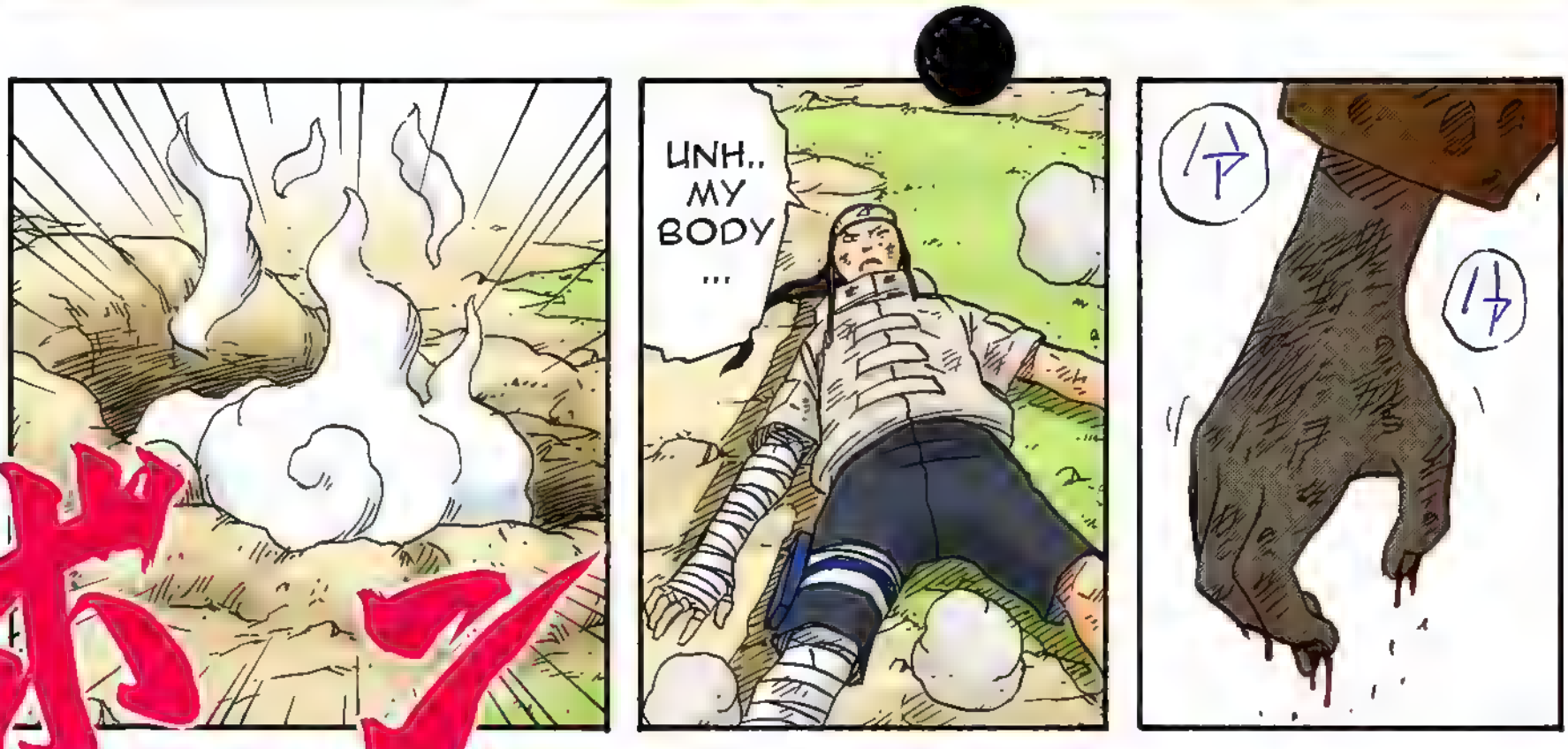
IT'S TOO BAD, BUT... THIS IS REALITY.

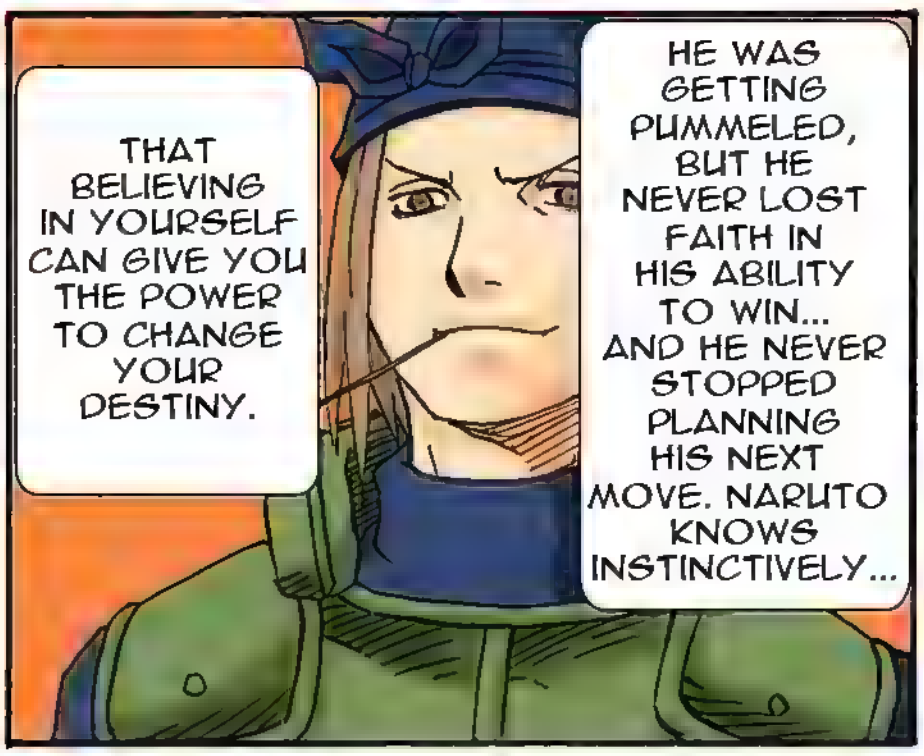
SORRY FAILURE...

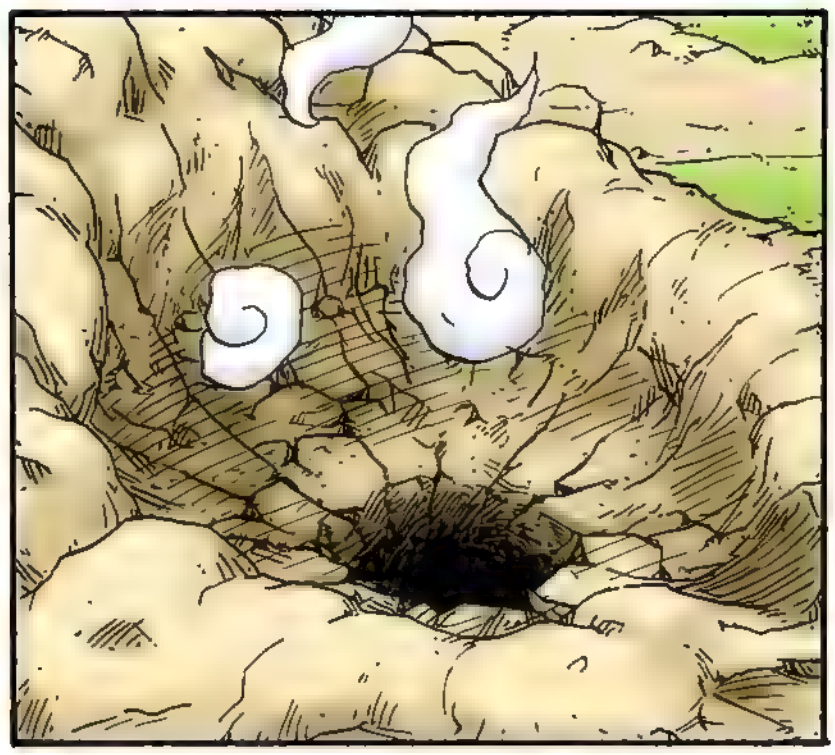







UNH.. MY BODY ...


THAT BELIEVING IN YOURSELF CAN GIVE YOU THE POWER TO CHANGE YOUR DESTINY.
HE WAS GETTING PUMMELED, BUT HE NEVER LOST FAITH IN HIS ABILITY TO WIN... AND HE NEVER STOPPED PLANNING HIS NEXT MOVE. NARUTO KNOWS INSTINCTIVELY...



.....

UGH... IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL OF THAT, YOU MANAGED TO CREATE A SHADOW DOPPELGANGER?

YOUR SIGNATURE NINJUTSU... THAT WAS CARELESS OF ME...

I FAILED THE ACADEMY GRADUATION EXAM THREE TIMES...

I...

...BECAUSE, UNLUCKY FOR ME, THE EXAM ALWAYS TESTED THE SAME NINJUTSU...

...MY ABSOLUTE WEAKEST NINJUTSU.

.....?

.....

.....

.....

.....!

!!

...WAS BUNSHIN NO JUTSU... THE ART OF THE DOPPEL-GANGER.

AND MY WEAKEST NINJUTSU...

...YOU'RE NOT A "FAILURE."

'CAUSE... UNLIKE ME...

YOU SHOULDN'T WHINE ABOUT SUCH TRIVIAL STUFF!

SO SHUT UP ABOUT "DESTINY" AND "INESCA-PABLE FATE"...

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...UZUMAKI NARUTO!!

THE WINNER IS...

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HM...

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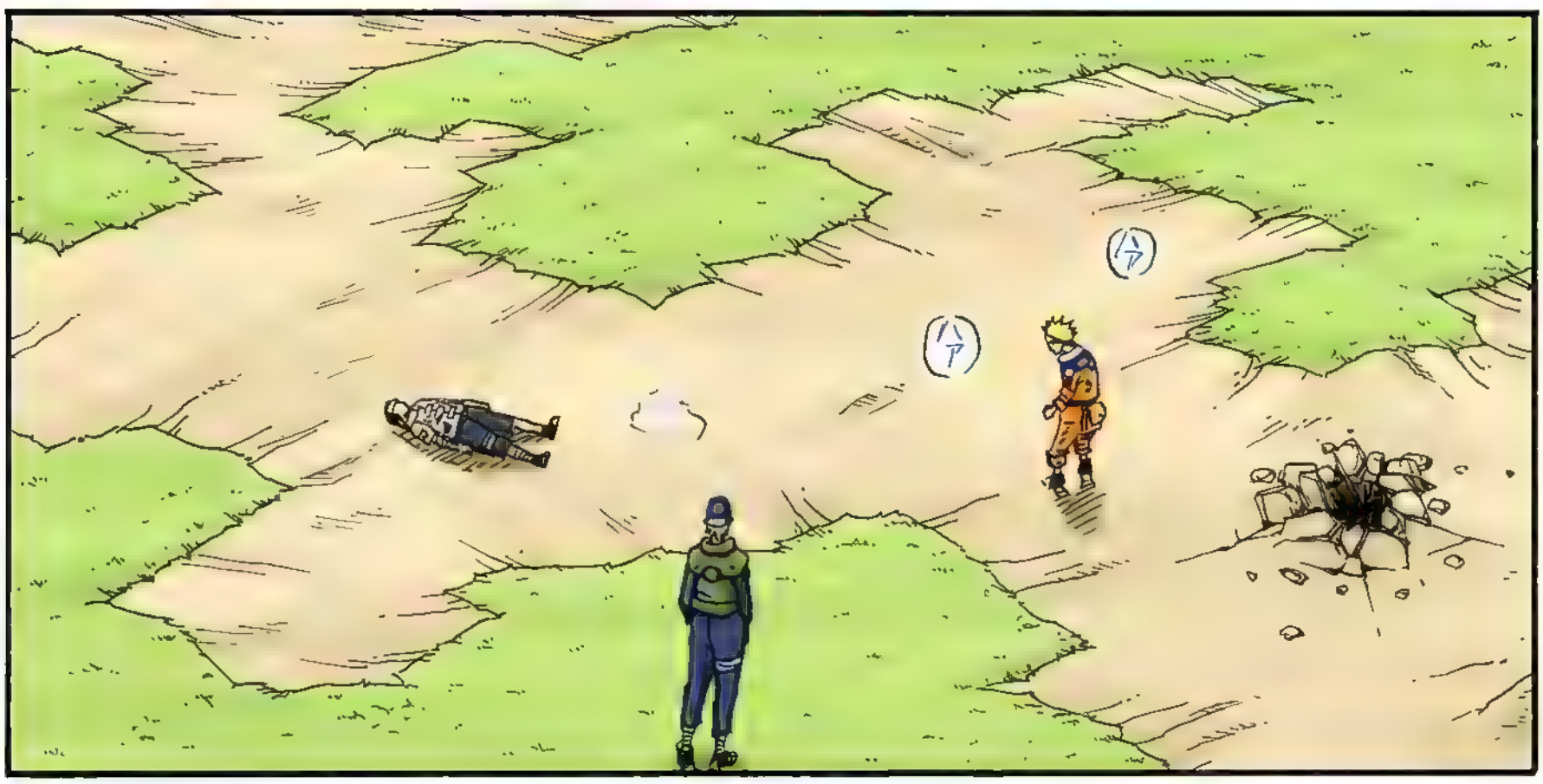

HEH...THE FOX BOY PUT ON QUITE A PERFOR-MANCE! I AM IMPRESSED.

NARUTO WON!

YES!

!

(17)

HA HA...

.....

WHAT A GREAT BATTLE!!

GOOD JOB!

THAT WAS AMAZING!

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HEH HEH...

パチ パチ パチ

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SHEESH. THE KID'S GOT STAMINA LIKE CRAZY, TOO.

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE STILL HAS THE ENERGY TO RUN AROUND.

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Ay Ay

I'M FEEL-ING A LITTLE JEAL-OUS ...

SIGH...

SOMEHOW...

YEAH, HE'S REALLY CLEVER!

HE'S PRETTY AMAZING...

.....

NARUTO JUST KEEPS GETTING STRONGER AND STRONGER.

WOW! HE ACTUALLY WON!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT... I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT NARUTO WAS ONE OF THE UNSLICK GUYS... JUST LIKE ME...

THAT'S A PRETTY IMPRE-SSIVE FEAT!

WATCING NARUTO FIGHT MAKES ME WANT TO WORK EVEN HARDER.

UH... NOTH-ING...

OH!

WHAT'S WRONG, SAKURA?

YEAH... I THINK EVERYONE HERE FROM KONOHA IS IN SHOCK.

HE WAS ABLE TO DRAW ON THE FOX'S CHAKRA WITHOUT LOSING HIMSELF...!

BUT NOW... I THINK HE'S GOT ME BEAT. THIS IS BAD... IT'S DEPRESS-ING!!

YOU KNOW, THE OPPOSITE OF THE COOL GUYS WHO ALWAYS HAVE GIRLS GOING GAGA OVER THEM.

"UN-SLICK GUYS"?

.....

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HEH!

WHEN IN THE WORLD DID HE GET TO THAT STAGE? DID KAKASHI TEACH HIM THAT?

NARUTO WAS ABLE TO USE THE POWER OF THE NINE-TAILED FOX... AND NOT JUST USE IT, BUT CHANNEL AND CONTROL IT STABLY.

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DID SHE COME TO WATCH US LIKE I TOLD HER?

I WONDER WHERE HINATA IS...

.....

...WILL TRY TO OPEN THE CAGE DOOR WITH ITS BEAK...

...HMPH... EVEN A CAGED BIRD, WHEN IT SMARTENS UP...

.....

...NEVER GIVING UP ITS DREAM...

...TO FLY FREE AGAIN.

BUT THIS TIME, YOU GOT BEAT.

FATHER..

.....

.....

.....

THOSE WHO WILL BECOME HOKAGE ARE BORN WITH THAT FATE.

WELL... SO WHAT ?!

WHY DO YOU KEEP TRYING SO HARD TO DEFY YOUR DESTINY?!

BECAUSE SOME-BODY TOLD ME I WAS A FAILURE!

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO'S "SPECIAL" YOU KNOW!

!

LORD HYUGA!

!

.....

CLACK

UH... Y-YES, SIR..

COULD I SPEAK WITH NEJI PRIVATELY?

FORGIVE ME...

.....

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...WHAT IS IT, SIR?

UNH...

...THE REAL TRUTH ...?

.....!

...TO TELL YOU THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT THAT DAY.

I CAME HERE...

.....

.....

...I FULLY INTENDED TO DIE.

...THAT DAY...

!

WHAT...?!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

THAT DAY, MY FATHER WAS MURDERED TO ACT AS YOUR BODY DOUBLE!

BUT...

...WHY TELL ME THIS NOW?

...BUT THAT IS NOT HOW IT HAPPENED.

...I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CAME TO THAT CONCLUSION...

BECAUSE NOW... I FEEL YOU MIGHT FINALLY BELIEVE ME...

.....!

HIASHI... DO NOT BE SO HASTY...

THE KEKKEI GENKAI OF THE HYUGA CLAN IS A VITAL ASSET OF THE VILLAGE.

AND YOUR PRIMARY DUTY AS HEAD OF THE MAIN BRANCH IS TO PROTECT IT, NOW AND FOREVER.

MMM...

THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE...

SACRIFICING MY LIFE WILL SAVE THE ENTIRE VILLAGE.

...BUT THAT IS WHY WE HAVE THE CADET BRANCH.

!.....

...IF IT DRAGS THE VILLAGE INTO INTRACTABLE WAR?

BUT WHAT PURPOSE DOES THAT DUTY SERVE...

OF COURSE...

OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO HAND OVER HIZASHI'S CORPSE AS YOUR BODY DOUBLE.

.....

.....

HIZASHI HAS ALREADY CONSENTED TO IT...

!

WITH HIZASHI, THAT KNOWLEDGE WILL BE SEALED INACCESSIBLY UPON HIS DEATH...

BUT... WHAT THEY WANT IS THE SECRET OF THE BYAKUGAN...!

.....

.....

.....

...."GIVE US HYUGA HIASHI'S CORPSE."

HMPH... THAT MAY BE THEIR TRUE AIM, BUT THE PRECISE WORDING OF THEIR DEMAND WAS SIMPLY...

I DON'T THINK THE LAND OF CLOUDS WILL SETTLE FOR THAT!

...THEY WILL BE UNABLE TO JUSTIFY RETALIATION.

IF WE PRETEND TO SWALLOW THEIR DEMANDS AND HAND OVER HIZASHI, WHO IS PHYSICALLY IDENTICAL TO YOU...

BUT...

.....

.....

...AND THE FATE OF ALL THOSE WHO ARE BORN INTO THE HYUGA CLAN.

THAT IS THE DESTINY OF THE MAIN BRANCH...

FOR THE SAKE OF THE FAMILY, YOU MUST POSSESS A HEART OF IRON... EVEN TOWARD YOUR OWN BROTHER!

HIASHI... THE TIME HAS COME. EVERY PREVIOUS CLAN HEAD HAS MADE PAINFUL SACRIFICES TO PROTECT THE HYUGA BLOOD...

.....

UNH...

.....

I... I'VE NEVER FACED SOMETHING THIS HUGE BEFORE! IT'S NOT THAT EASY...

.....!

...WHERE IS THE STRONG, AGGRESSIVE LORD HIASHI I KNOW SO WELL?

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NO... HIZASHI, YOU...!

PLEASE... LET ME DO THIS.

B-BUT...YOU'VE GOT NEJI TO WORRY ABOUT TOO... WHY DO THIS FOR THE MAIN BRANCH...?

...WHY CHOOSE DEATH?

YOU MISUNDER-STAND.

I... HAVE LONG RESENTED THE MAIN BRANCH.

TO BE HONEST, I STILL ABHOR YOU ALL...

!

.....

IT WILL BE THE FIRST DECISION...

...I HAVE EVER BEEN ABLE TO MAKE FOR MYSELF.

.....

AND THAT IS WHY... I CHOOSE TO DIE PROTECTING MY ELDER BROTHER..

...NOT THE HEAD OF THE MAIN BRANCH.

.....

BUT HERE, TODAY...

...MY OWN WILL HAS FINALLY AWAKENED.

NEJI HAS GROWN UP SEEING ONLY THE UGLY SIDE OF ME...

.....

SO PLEASE CONVEY TO NEJI...

...BUT THAT I FREELY CHOSE TO DIE...

...IN ORDER TO PROTECT NEJI, MY SIBLINGS, THE CLAN AND THE ENTIRE VILLAGE!

...THAT I WAS NOT MURDERED TO PROTECT THE MAIN BRANCH...

I JUST WANTED TO CHOOSE MY OWN DESTINY... THAT'S ALL...

BROTHER... I ALWAYS WANTED TO DEFY THE HYUGA DESTINY, EVEN IF ONLY ONCE...

SO... BY CHOOSING YOUR OWN DEATH... YOU GAIN FREEDOM...?

.....

UGH...

AND THAT IS THE TRUTH.

AND THAT IS WHY I AM TELLING YOU THIS NOW...

I KNEW YOU WOULD THINK SO... THAT IS WHY I WAITED THIS LONG.

WHAT A CONVENIENT EXPLANATION! IT SOUNDS EXACTLY LIKE SOMETHING THE MAIN BRANCH WOULD COOK UP TO PLACATE ME...

YOU CAN'T REALLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT STORY!

ESPECIALLY AFTER ALL THIS TIME...!

!!

...NOT AS HEAD OF THE MAIN BRANCH, BUT AS HIZASHI'S OLDER BROTHER ...!

I WANTED TO RELAY MY BROTHER'S FINAL WORDS TO YOU...

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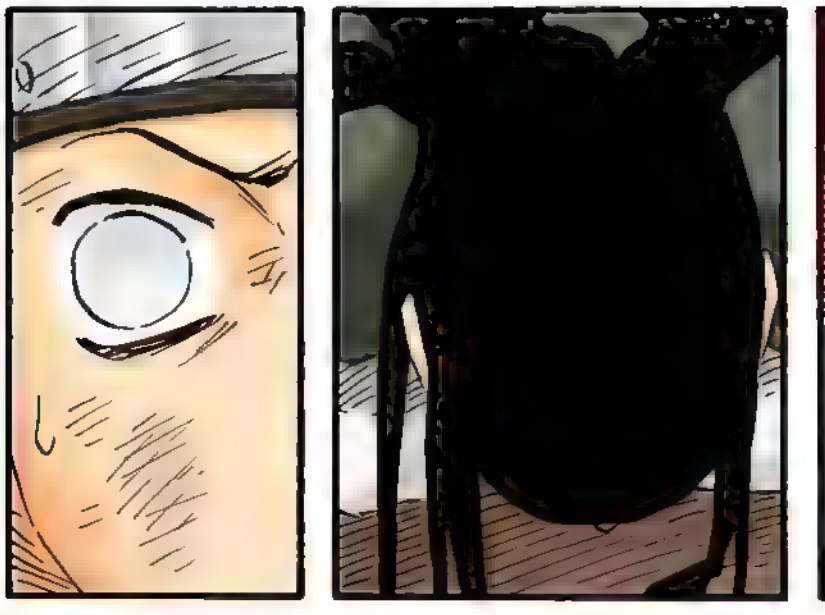
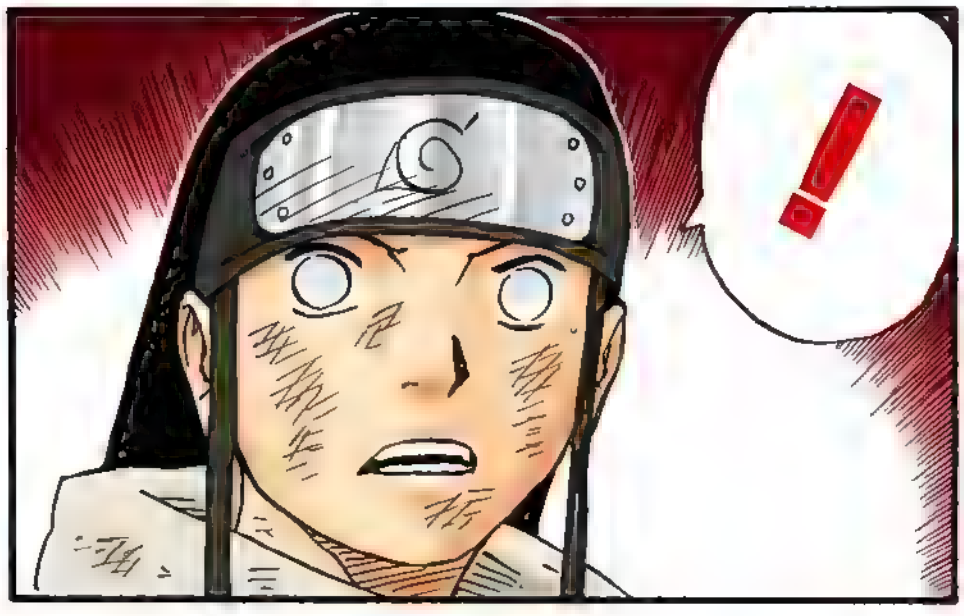
PLEASE BELIEVE ME...

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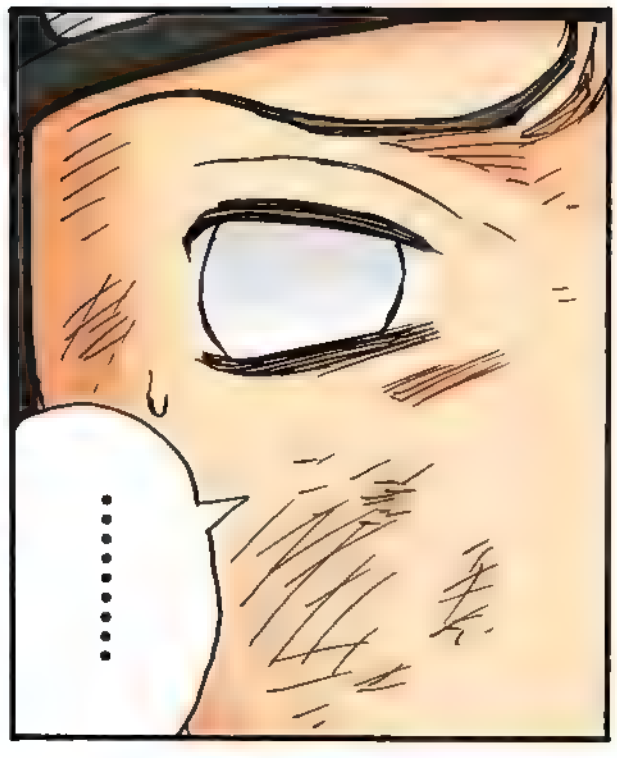
...RAISE YOUR HEAD.
...PLEASE...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OR IF EACH PERSON CAN CHOOSE HIS OWN PATH TO FOLLOW.

FATHER... I STILL CAN'T BE ENTIRELY CERTAIN WHETHER PEOPLE'S FATES SIMPLY COAST ALONG LIKE THE CLOUDS IN THE SKY...

AND IN MY MATCH TODAY, I FINALLY LEARNED THAT PEOPLE WITH DREAMS ARE THE ONES WHO ARE TRULY STRONG.

BUT WHEN YOU DECIDE TO FOLLOW YOUR OWN PATH YOU CAN STRIVE TO ACHIEVE YOUR OWN DREAMS.

I SUPPOSE THE DESTINATION MIGHT BE THE SAME EITHER WAY.

TO BECOME STRONGER. RIGHT NOW, I WANT TO BECOME SO STRONG, I WILL NEVER LOSE TO ANYONE AGAIN.

AND... FATHER MY DREAM IS SIMPLE...

...FLYING FREE.

FATHER... THERE ARE SO MANY BIRDS IN THE SKY TODAY...

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?

...NO...

...I BELIEVE THEIR EXCITEMENT IS MORE IN ANTICIPATION OF THE NEXT FIGHT...

HO HO... THE CROWD IS ASTIR!

YES, IT WAS A ROUSING BATTLE...

GAARA

UCHIHA SASUKE

...NO OTHER MATCH IS MORE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED!

FOR ALL OF THE CURIOUS SHINOBI RULERS AND LORDS...

ポン!

.....

.....

.....

...HAS HE ARRIVED YET...?

BY THE WAY...

THAT'S THE THING... WE STILL HAVEN'T HAD ANY NEWS OF SASUKE...

.....

.....

CONSI-DERING OROCHI-MARU'S INVOL-VEMENT ...

...PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER TO ANNOUNCE A FORFEIT NOW... BEFORE THE CROWD BECOMES ROWDY...

HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA MAKE US WAIT, HUH?!

WHAT'S GOING ON?! HURRY UP AND START THE NEXT MATCH!!

SASUKE ...

IS SASUKE NOT HERE YET?

WHAT **IS** GOING ON?

FEH...

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"THE WISE MAN DOES NOT COURT DANGER"... A PRUDENT DECISION...

WHAT COULD HE BE DOING?! IS HE NOT COMING AT ALL?

OF COURSE HE'LL COME...

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT!

...WHAT ARE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT...?

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IF YOU DON'T SHOW UP SOON... YOU'LL BE DISQUALIFIED!

BUT WHERE THE HECK ARE YOU?

.....

SASUKE WILL BE ELIMINATED BY FORFEIT!

AS THE RULES DICTATE...

.....

THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE...

THIS IS STARTING TO LOOK BAD...

...WHAT THE HECK ARE WE GONNA DO?! WITHOUT HIM, OUR PLAN IS RUINED...

...UGH...

.....

I'M GOING... TO VERIFY MY EXIS-TENCE.

UGH... DONT TELL ME...

愛

I REALLY HOPE GAARA DIDN'T KILL THE BOY...

MAN... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...

ONCE MORE, SASUKE...

I KNOW YOU'RE THERE... THE BLOODLUST IS RADIATING OFF YOU.

WHY DON'T YOU COME ON OUT...?

.....

...WHAT IS IT?

.....!

IT'S YOU...?

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SIGH...

.....!

I ASK YOU TO STAY THE DECLARA-TION OF UCHIHA SASUKE'S FORFEIT JUST A BIT LONGER.

...LORD HOKAGE...

UNLESS WE CAN PROVIDE A CLEAR-CUT EXPLANATION TO SATISFY THE SHINOBI RULERS AND LORDS GATHERED HERE...

...I KNOW OF NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD WAIT FOR HIM.

FORGIVE ME, BUT... NO MATTER WHAT THEIR LEVEL OF BRILLIANCE...

...SHINOBI WHO LACK PUNCTUALITY ARE NOT COMPETENT TO BECOME CHÛNIN.

!!

I SEE...

BUT... THERE IS SUFFICIENT REASON...

.....

!?

A MAJORITY OF THE SHINOBI RULERS AND LORDS HERE, INCLUDING MYSELF...

...CAME HERE ALMOST SOLELY TO OBSERVE THAT MATCH.

.....

.....

THIS BOY IS THE LAST OF THE UCHIHA CLAN...

AND AS LEADER OF THE LAND OF WIND, I BESEECH YOU...

...TO ALLOW HIM TO FACE GAARA.

...BUT--

...WE'LL POSTPONE THE MATCH... TO WAIT FOR SASUKE.

VERY WELL...

...SIR?

SASUKE MAY NEVER SHOW UP, BUT... THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.

.....

.....

INFORM THE PROCTOR..

LORD HOKAGE! ARE YOU SURE?

.....

.....

...YES, SIR.

IF OUR AIM IS TO SHOW ALL THESE POTENTIAL CLIENTS THE QUALITY OF OUR VILLAGE'S SHINOBI...

...THERE CAN BE NO BETTER OPPONENT THAN UCHIHA.

HOW COULD I PASS UP SUCH A WONDERFUL OPPOR-TUNITY...?

WELL, LORD KAZEKAGE... YOU ARE RARELY SO INSISTENT! I MUST SAY I'M SURPRISED...

WHY IS THAT...?

WHERE'S UCHIHA?!

OKAY...

HEY, WHAT'S THE HOLD-UP?!

!!

SO...

EVERY-ONE!

...THIS MATCH WILL BE POSTPONED... AND WE WILL PROCEED WITH THE NEXT SCHEDULED MATCH!

ONE OF THE CONTENDERS FOR THE MATCH HAS NOT ARRIVED YET.

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WHAT THE HECK COULD SASUKE BE UP TO...?

ALL RIGHT! SASUKE WON'T BE FORCED TO FORFEIT!

HEY! YOU MEAN MY MATCH HAS BEEN MOVED UP?!

SIGH... THAT'S A RELIEF!

PHEW

WELL THEN... THE NEXT PAIRING IS KANKURO AGAINST ABURAME SHINO.

PLEASE COME DOWN!

THIS MATCH IS UTTERLY TRIVIAL, AND..

UGH...

.....

.....

MORE IMPORTANTLY... IF I REVEAL KARASU'S "HIDDEN MECHANISMS" TO THE ENEMY SO SOON, IT MIGHT JEOPARDIZE THE PLAN!

!!

HUH?!

...I WITHDRAW!

!!

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FEH...

WHAT?!

!!

OKAY!!

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FEH...

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WHY AM I ALWAYS GETTING SHAFTED IN THE MATCH SCHEDULE, HUH?

HEY! HEY! WHAT'S THE RUSH?! HOLD YOUR HORSES!

DARN IT... I SHOULD JUST WITHDRAW, TOO...

WELL, AT LEAST YOU SEEM WILLING TO FIGHT!

HEY! FINAL CANDIDATE, GET DOWN HERE!!

HUH?!

ALL RIGHT! GO GET 'EM, SHIKAMARU!!

NARUTO, YOU JERK...

UGH...

WAAAH!

.....

JUST GET IT OVER WITH!!

HEY! START THE MATCH, ALREADY!

AND NOW THEY'RE BEING OFFERED A POOR SUBSTITUTE FOR THE MAIN ATTRACTION... EVERYONE'S ANNOYED...

SIGH... EVERYBODY WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SASUKE'S MATCH...

HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA LIE THERE? GET UP, KID!

WHAT, YOU'RE GONNA GIVE UP, TOO?!

...IS THERE ANY POINT IN FIGHTING?

NO ONE CARES ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF MY MATCH...

GET UP AND FIGHT!!

HEY, SHIKAMARU!!

SIGH... HE DOESN'T HAVE A COMPETITIVE BONE IN HIS BODY...

I'M UP AGAINST A GIRL AGAIN?

HEY! I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU TO START YET...

IF YOU WON'T COME TO ME, I'M GONNA GO TO YOU!!

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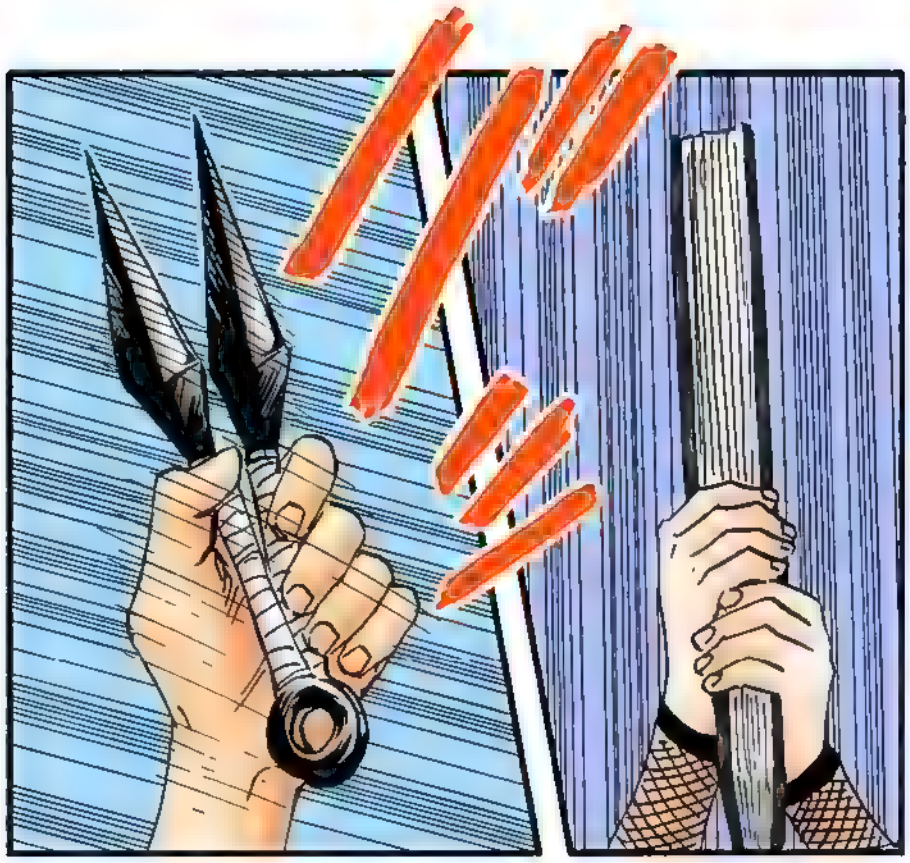

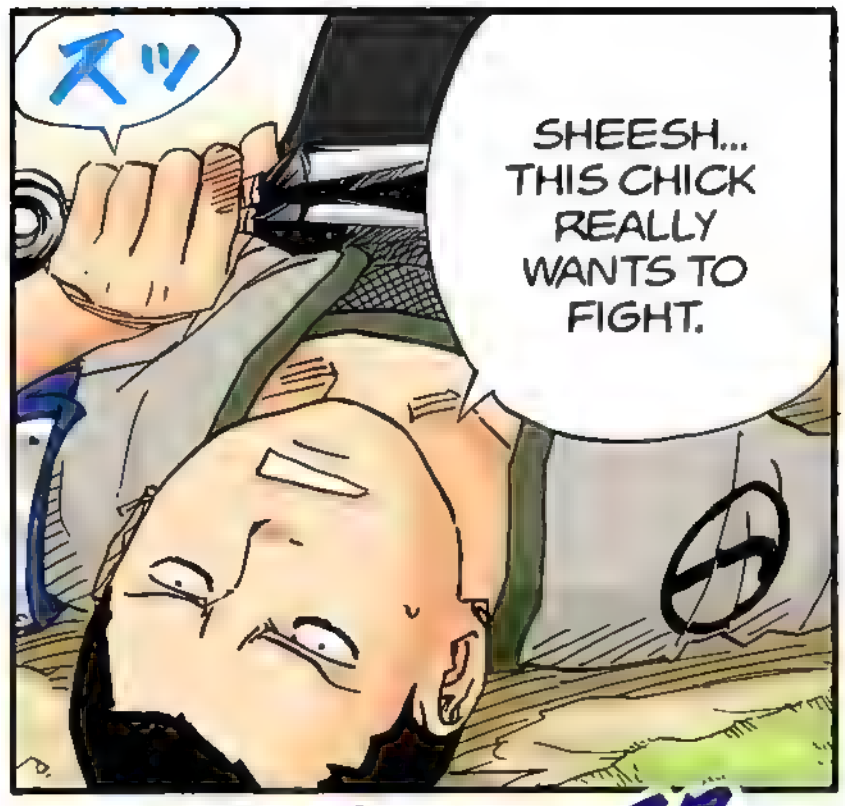
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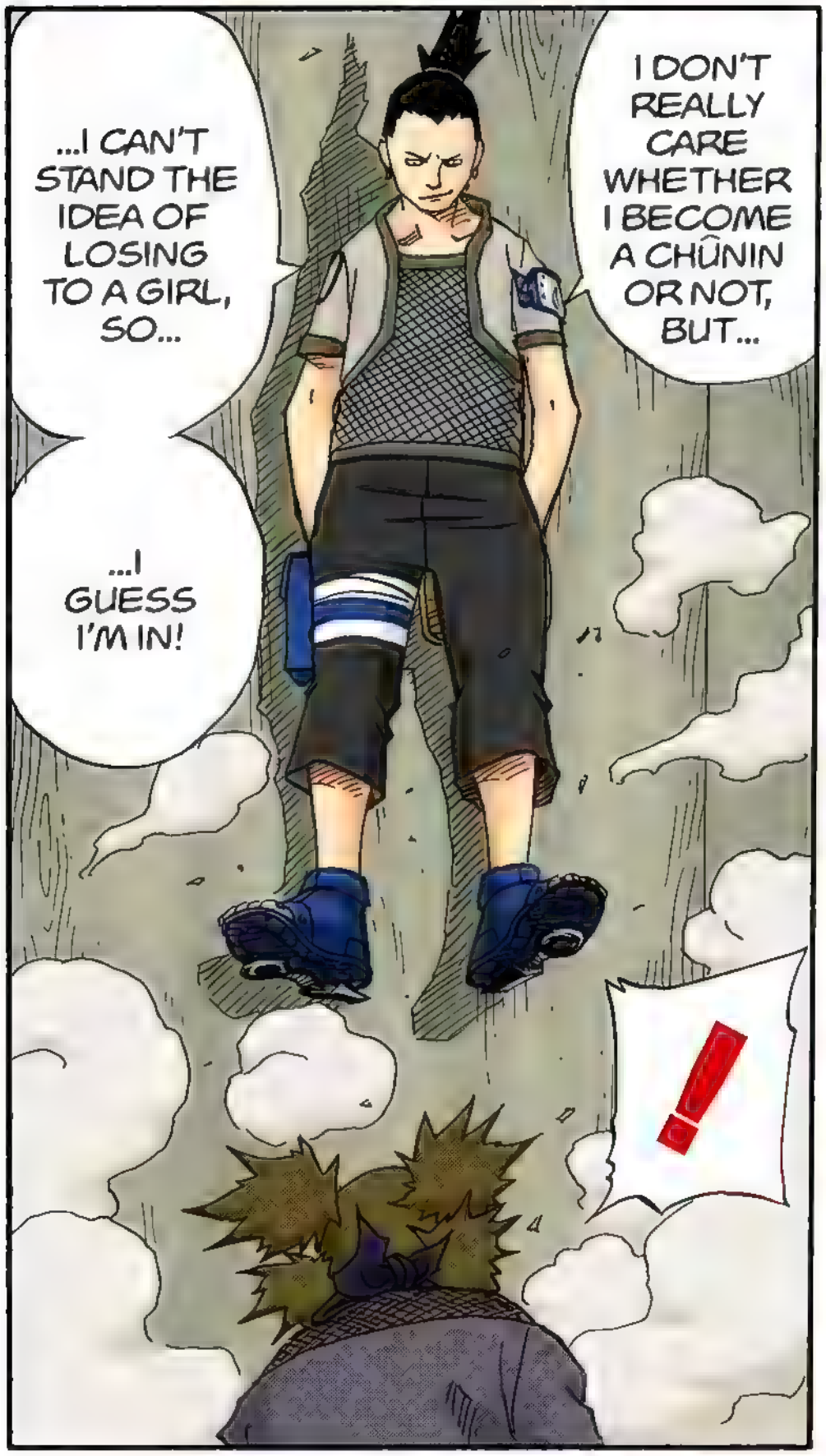
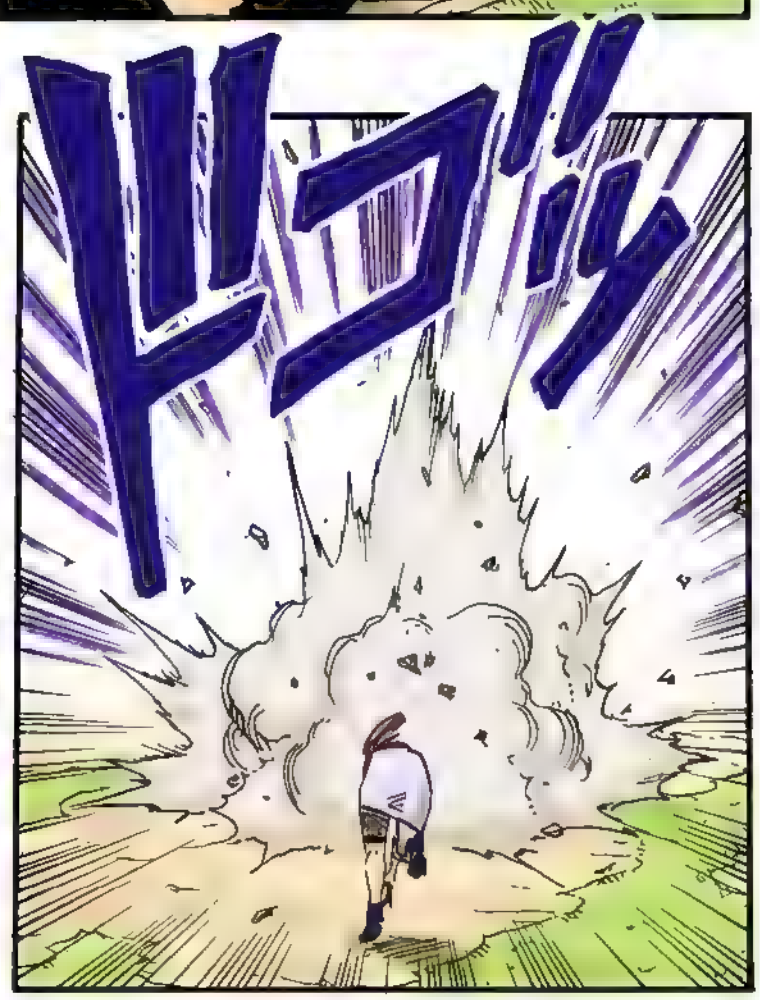
SHEESH... THIS CHICK REALLY WANTS TO FIGHT.


...I CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF LOSING TO A GIRL, SO...
...I GUESS I'M IN!
I DON'T REALLY CARE WHETHER I BECOME A CHŪNIN OR NOT, BUT...
!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!!

SECOND ANNIVERSAY CELEBRATION

THE RESULTS OF THE SECOND CHARACTER POPULARITY SURVEY!!

107：THE BOY WITH NO FIGHTING SPIRIT!!

応募総数 17,395票!!

50位まで

人気投票結果大発表!!

残念!?意外!?キミの好きなキャラもここにいるかも!?

第22位 カブト 122票

第23位 おたまじゃくし 113票

第24位 油女シノ 110票

第25位 みたらしアンコ 108票

第26位 大蛇丸 105票

第27位 中忍試験官A 100票

第28位 テマリ 94票

第29位 猿飛アスマ 92票

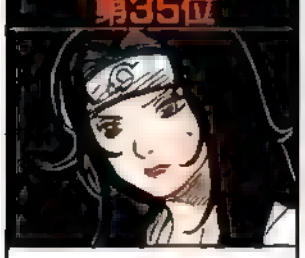
第30位 テンテン 75票

第31位 カンクロウ 64票

第32位 山中いの 63票

第33位 うちはイタチ 62票

第34位 中忍試験官B 50票



第35位 夕日紅 49票

36TH PLACE	POOCHIE/SHOOTING STAR	33 VOTES
37TH PLACE	KONOHAWARU	29 VOTES
38TH PLACE	DOSUKINUTA	28 VOTES
39TH PLACE	SQUIRREL	26 VOTES
40TH PLACE	SNOWSHOE HARE	25 VOTES
41ST PLACE	NINJA DOGS	
	INARI	24 VOTES
43RD PLACE	MORINO IBIKI	21 VOTES
44TH PLACE	MASTER EBISU	
	SPECIAL JONIN NINJA B	17 VOTES
46TH PLACE	KONOHA BLACK OPS A	
	KIN TSUCHI	16 VOTES
48TH PLACE	NINJA TURTLE	
	JIRAIYA'S TOAD	14 VOTES
50TH PLACE	AKIMICHI CHOJI	13 VOTES

HMPH!!!

...I GUESS I'M IN!

...I CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF LOSING TO A GIRL, SO...

ドオオオ

HE'S PRETTY QUICK...

!

BUT... IT'S NOT LIKE A BOY CAN JUST CLOBBER A GIRL, EITHER...

SHIKAMARU! JUST HIT HER WITH A 16-PUNCH COMBO!!!

ドガガガ

KNOCK HER BLOCK OFF!

OH... IT'S YOU.

IS YOUR STOMACH BETTER ALREADY?

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……

IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?

MAN... WHY DO I ALWAYS END UP FIGHTING GIRLS...?

THIS GUY USES SHADOWS IN HIS TECHNIQUES, RIGHT? HE'S PROBABLY TRYING TO LURE ME INTO THE WOODED AREA WHERE IT'S SHADY, BUT THERE'S NO WAY I'M FALLING FOR THAT!

HM? I THOUGHT SASUKE'S MATCH WAS NEXT...

OH!

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シー

MUTTER MUTTER...

BETTER NOT BOTHER HER NOW...

ボリボリ

...IT'S KINDA WEIRD.

ポリポリ

HUH... SHIKAMARU, FIGHTING IN THE FINALS...?

THAT'S NOT TRUE!

HE'S SO LAZY.

YOU THINK...?

WELL... I BET HE'S GOING TO GIVE UP AND QUIT PRETTY QUICK.

HE'S GOT A PASSIONATE SIDE TO HIM, TOO!

YOU MISSED HIS DRAMATIC LEAP DOWN TO THE ARENA FLOOR...

HE SEEMS UNUSUALLY AGGRESSIVE TODAY!

SHIKAMARU MAY NOT BE A SUPERSTAR OR ANYTHING, BUT...

DON'T SAY THAT!

HE'S REALLY GOOD AT STRATEGY AND STUFF!

THAT'S WHY WE ALL MADE IT THROUGH THE FOREST AND GOT TO THE PRELIMS!

GO, SHIKAMARU!

ほ!!

THEY'RE SO FREE...

OH... HOW I ENVY THE CLOUDS...

HEY! C'MON!

.....

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO DESIRE TO FIGHT.

THE WHOLE REASON I BECAME A NINJA IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS SO I COULD LIVE MY LIFE THE WAY I WANTED...

WHAT'S WITH THE STUPID EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE...? IS HE MOCKING ME?!

BUT... IT LOOKS IT WON'T BE THAT EASY...

NINJA ART KAMA-ITACHI! WIND SCYTHE!!

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スパッ

WHOA!

ACK!

THAT'S RIGHT... THIS IS THE MOVE SHE USED TO DESTROY MY WEAPONS ATTACK...

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IT'S SHRINKING!!

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AHA...!

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...YOU CAN'T INCREASE ITS OVERALL SIZE PAST ITS NORMAL SURFACE AREA... RIGHT?

EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN STRETCH YOUR SHADOW AT WILL...

THE SHADOW POSSES-SION TECHNIQUE... REVEALED!

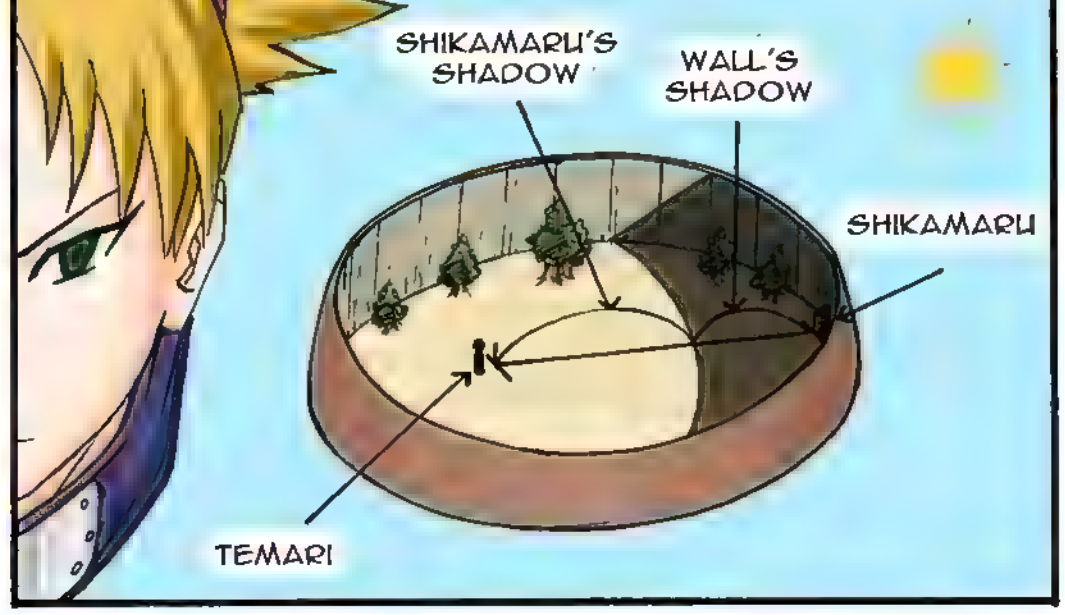
HA HA... RIGHT!

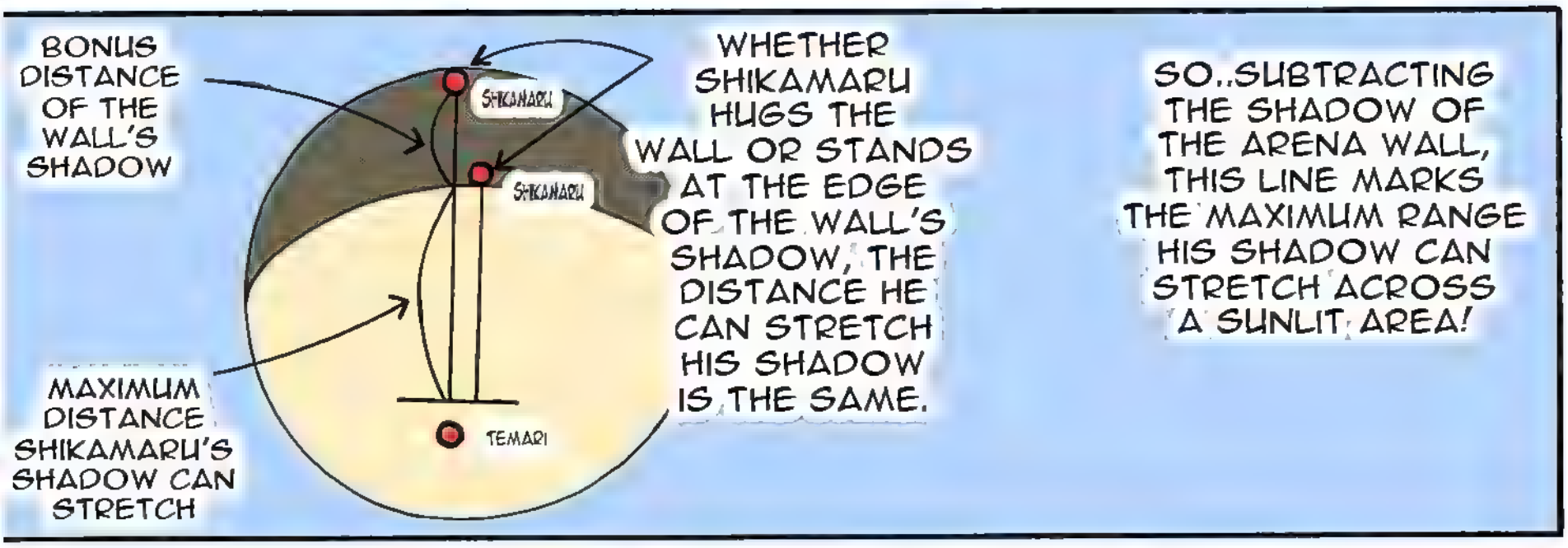
IT SEEMS THERE ARE SOME LIMITS TO HOW MUCH YOU CAN MANIPULATE THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF YOUR SHADOW, HM?

THIS IS THE FARTHEST HIS SHADOW CAN REACH!

トン

THAT MEANS... CONSIDERING HIS CHOICE OF POSITION AT THE POINT ON THE ARENA'S WALL WHERE THE ARENA'S ARE DEEPEST, I'VE GOT TO ASSUME THAT HE'S ABLE TO USE THE SHADOW OF THE WALL TO ALLOW HIS OWN SHADOW TO EXTEND FARTHER... BUT EVEN SO

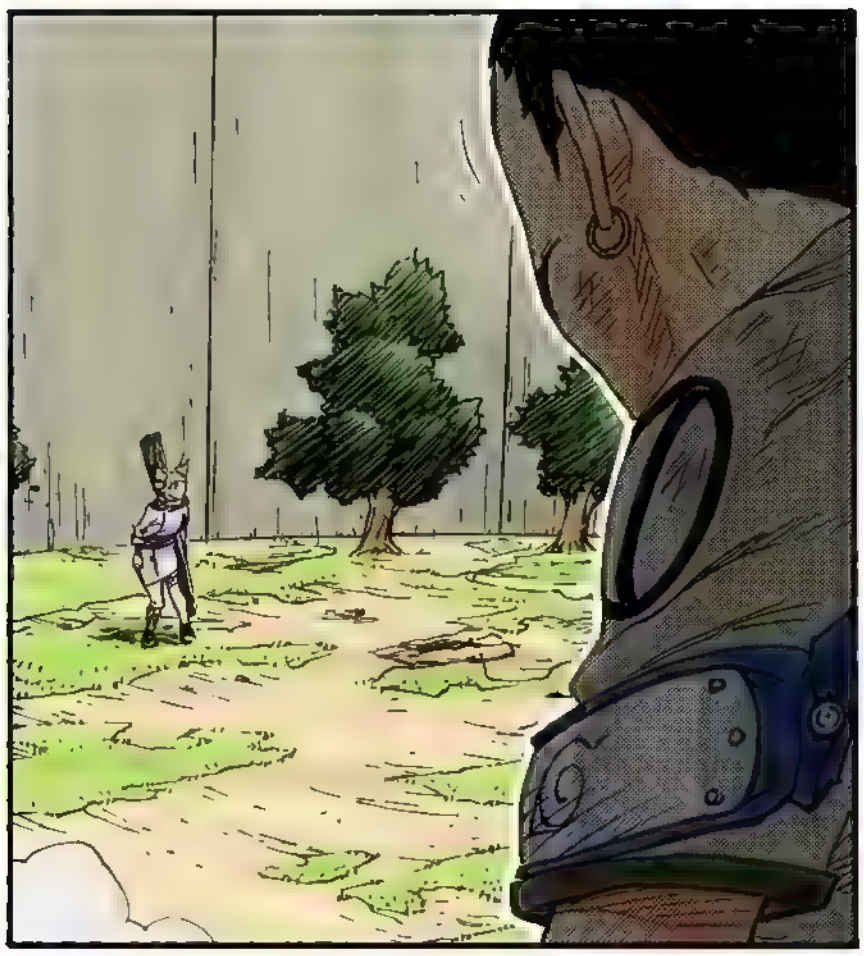


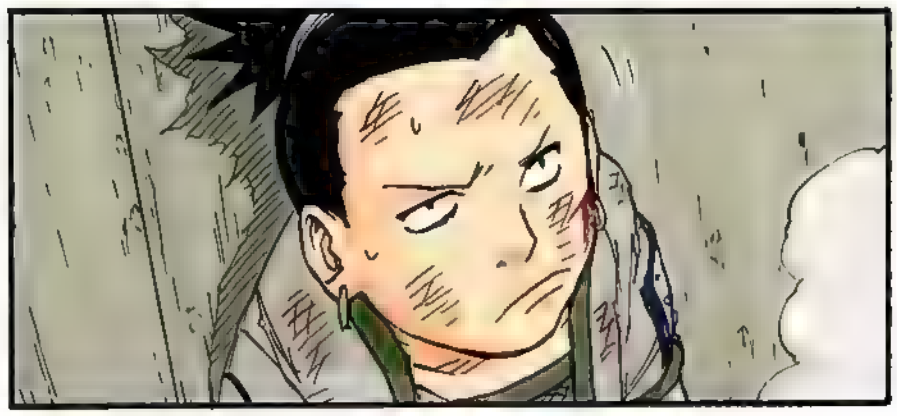

BONUS DISTANCE OF THE WALL'S SHADOW
MAXIMUM DISTANCE SHIKAMARU'S SHADOW CAN STRETCH
SHIKAMARU
SHIKAMARU
TEMARI
WHETHER SHIKAMARU HUGS THE WALL OR STANDS AT THE EDGE OF THE WALL'S SHADOW, THE DISTANCE HE CAN STRETCH HIS SHADOW IS THE SAME.
SO..SUBTRACTING THE SHADOW OF THE ARENA WALL, THIS LINE MARKS THE MAXIMUM RANGE HIS SHADOW CAN STRETCH ACROSS A SUNLIT AREA!

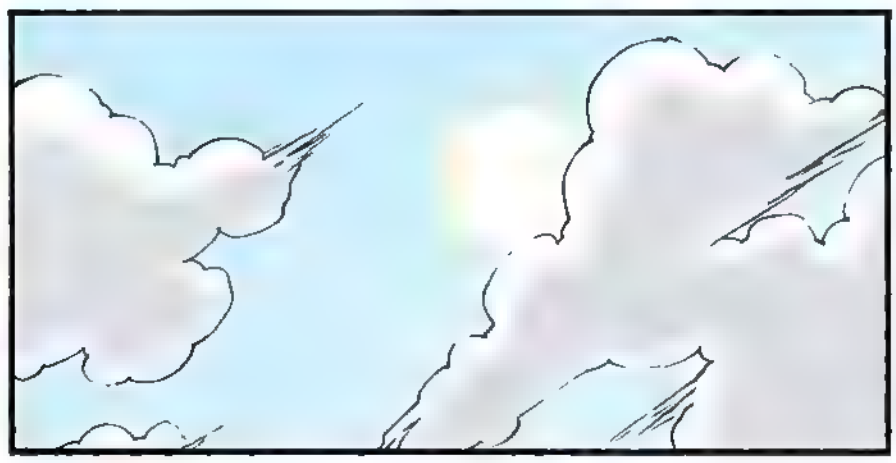
TEMARI'S BETTER AT DISTANCE FIGHTING THAN CLOSE COMBAT ANYWAY... SHE'S PRACTICALLY WON.

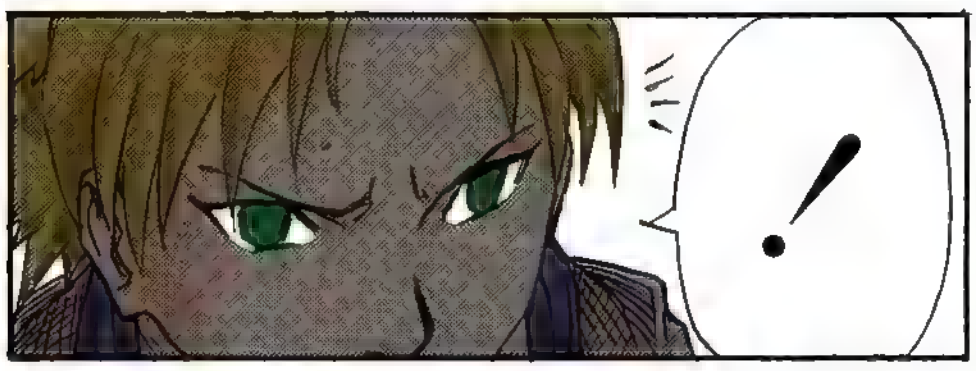
SHE'S MEASURING THE DISTANCE USING HER FAN...

15M, 32 CM ...



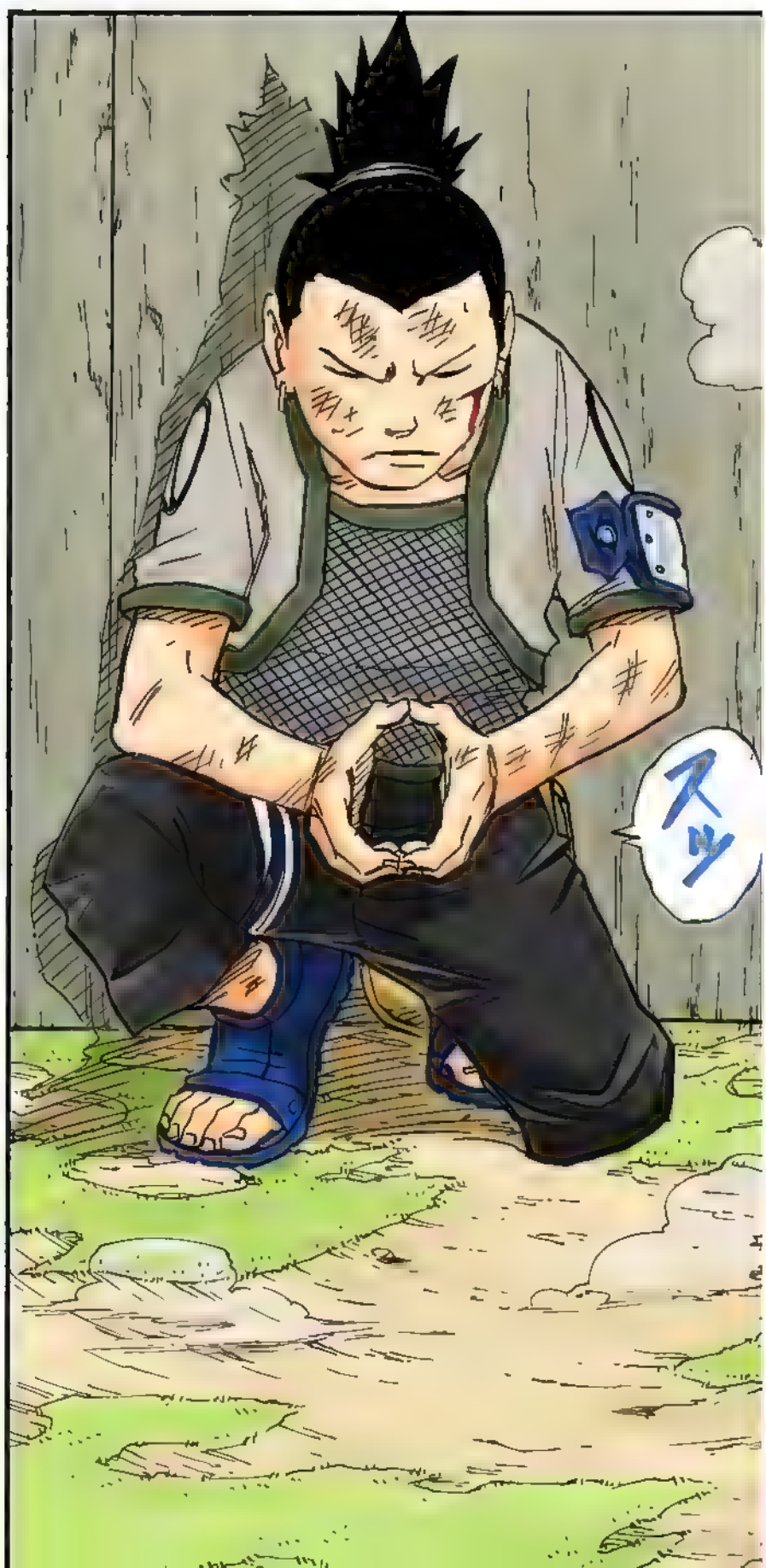





!

HM!
!

THAT'S NOT A SIGN.
WHAT IS THAT HAND SIGN...?
HUH...?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HE REALLY KNOWS HOW TO RELAX! HE ENJOYS LETTING TIME SLIP BY...

...JUST LIKE AN OLD GEEZER.

HABIT?

HUH?

IT'S JUST A HABIT OF HIS.

...WHENEVER HE GETS STUCK, HE ALWAYS ASSUMES...

...THAT POSE.

HE'S ALWAYS BUGGING ME TO PLAY GO OR SHOGI WITH HIM, BUT...

AND...

...I'VE NEVER BEATEN HIM... NOT EVEN ONCE.

?

HE'S PLOTTING HIS STRATEGY!

BUT... WAIT A MINUTE! I REMEMBER REVIEWING HIS GRADES BACK WHEN WE WERE DIVIDING UP THE GENIN INTO TEAMS...

OH REALLY?

...SHIKAMARU'S MARKS WERE AS BAD AS NARUTO'S!

...WERE USED BY MILITARY ADVISORS TO PLAN THEIR STRATEGIES.

PEOPLE SAY THAT BEFORE THEY BECAME PLAYTHINGS, THOSE SAME GAME PIECES...

SO I GUESS SHIKAMARU WOULD MAKE A FIRST-RATE MILITARY ADVISOR!

THIS IS A REAL BATTLE... NOT A GAME! GEEZ...

STRATEGY ...?

...AND HE TOLD ME HE ALWAYS DOZED OFF DURING EXAMS.

BACK AT THE ACADEMY, HE WAS TOO LAZY TO EVEN MOVE HIS PENCIL TO TAKE NOTES...

I KIND OF DID IT JUST TO MESS WITH HIM, BUT...

...I GAVE HIM AN I.Q. TEST. I CONVINCED HIM IT WAS JUST ANOTHER PUZZLE.

...I WAS SO BAFFLED BY HIS PROFICIENCY AT STRATEGY GAMES THAT I...

ONE TIME...

...SO... WHAT WAS HIS SCORE...?

HIS I.Q. IS OVER 200... HE'S A FREAKIN' GENIUS!

HE'S A SHARP ONE, ALL RIGHT!

HE'S GONNA MAKE HIS MOVE!

HE'S DONE THINKING ...

T...TWO HUN-DRED ?!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE FINALLY MUSTERED UP SOME FIGHTING SPIRIT!

ヴィーカ

KAMA-ITACHI NO JUTSU! WIND SCYTH TECH-NIQUE!!

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME!!

UGH!

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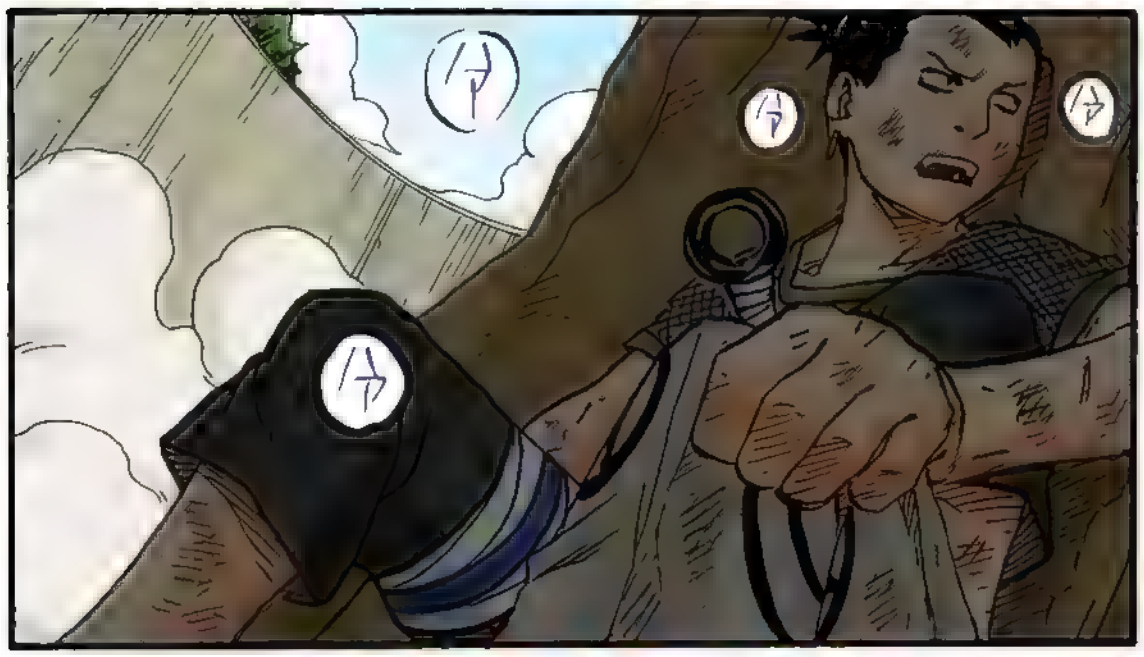
UNH...

...HE CAN'T GET ANYWHERE NEAR HER!

I...I THINK SO... I'M ALMOST POSITIVE!

DOES HE REALLY HAVE A STRATEGY...?!



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UGH!

...SHOOT!!

NO... WAIT!

HEH... IT'S USELESS! AS LONG AS I STAY BEHIND, YOU CAN'T CATCH ME...

UGH...!

...SO THAT THE AREA OF THE WALL'S SHADOW AND OF YOUR OWN SHADOW WOULD INCREASE!

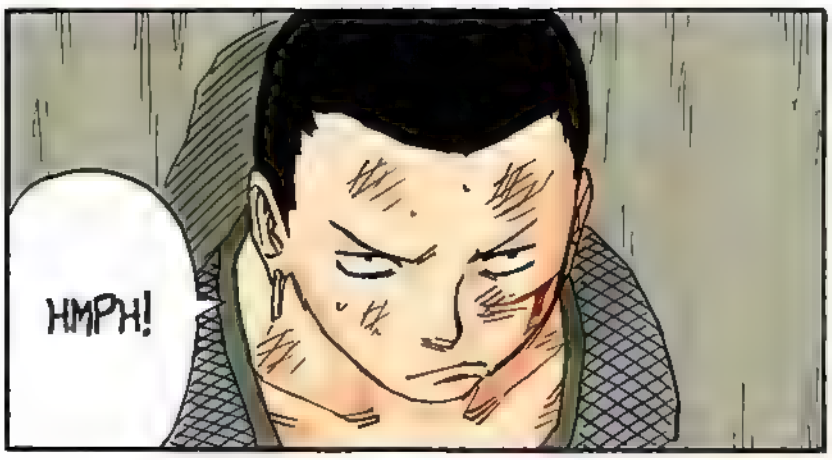
I GET IT... YOU WERE BUYING TIME, WAITING FOR THE SUN TO DROP...

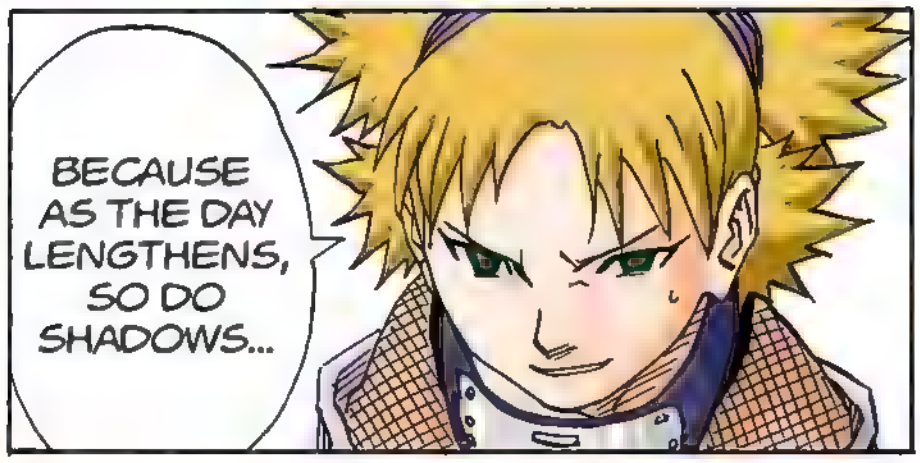
NICELY DONE...

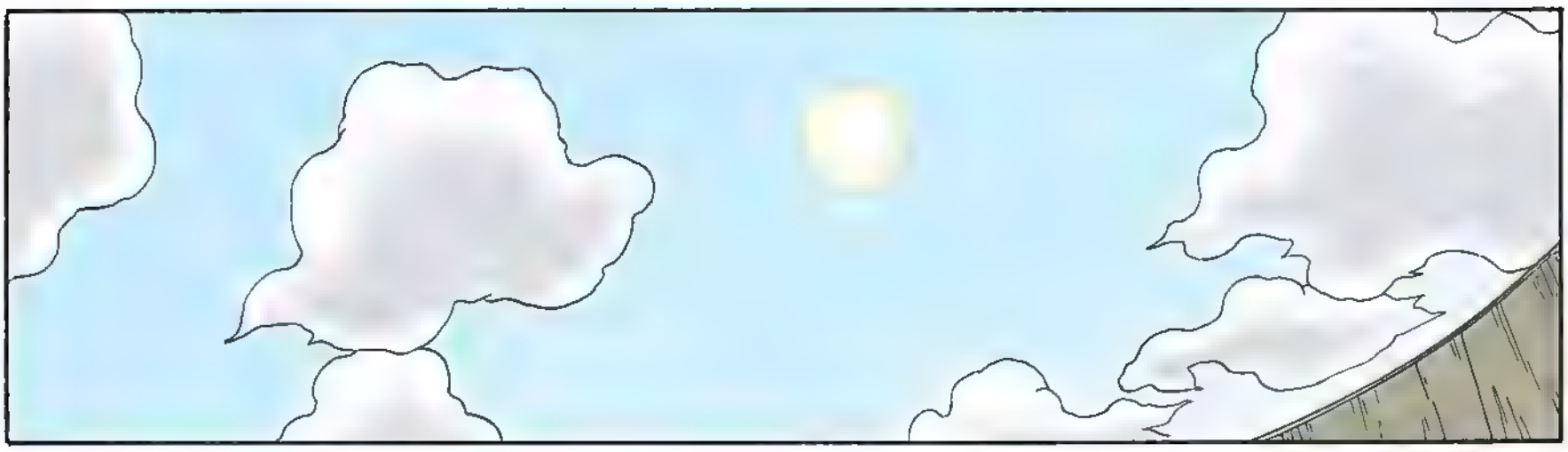
HMPH!

BECAUSE AS THE DAY LENGTHENS, SO DO SHADOWS...

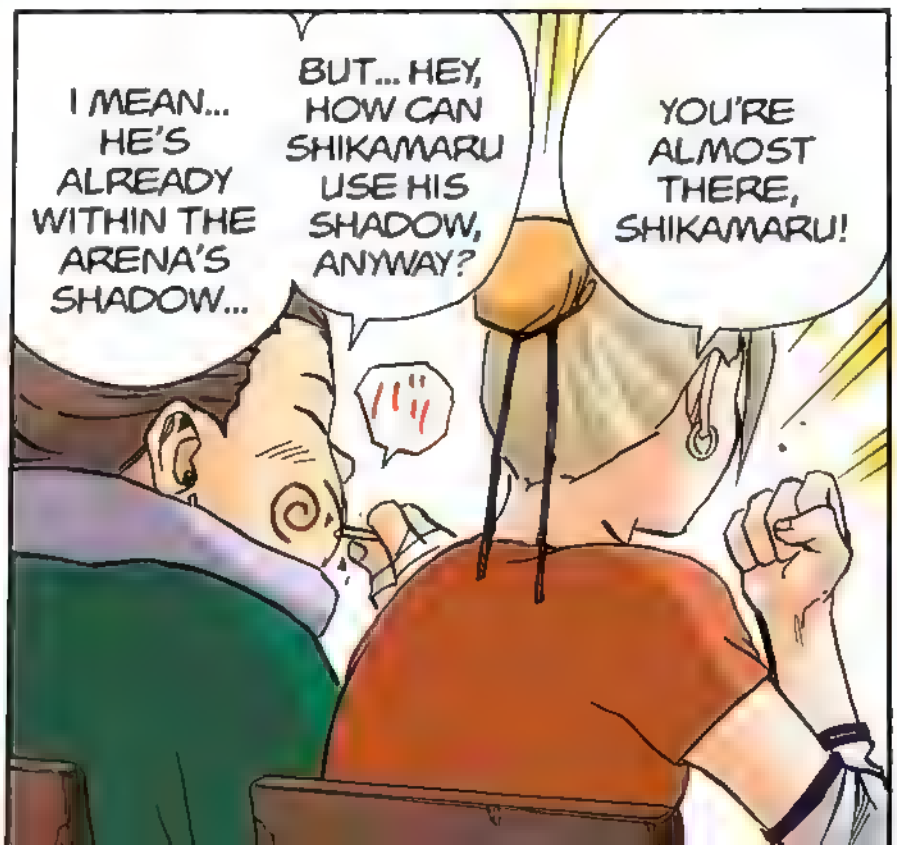
ナンバー 108 : A PLOT WITHIN A PLOT?!

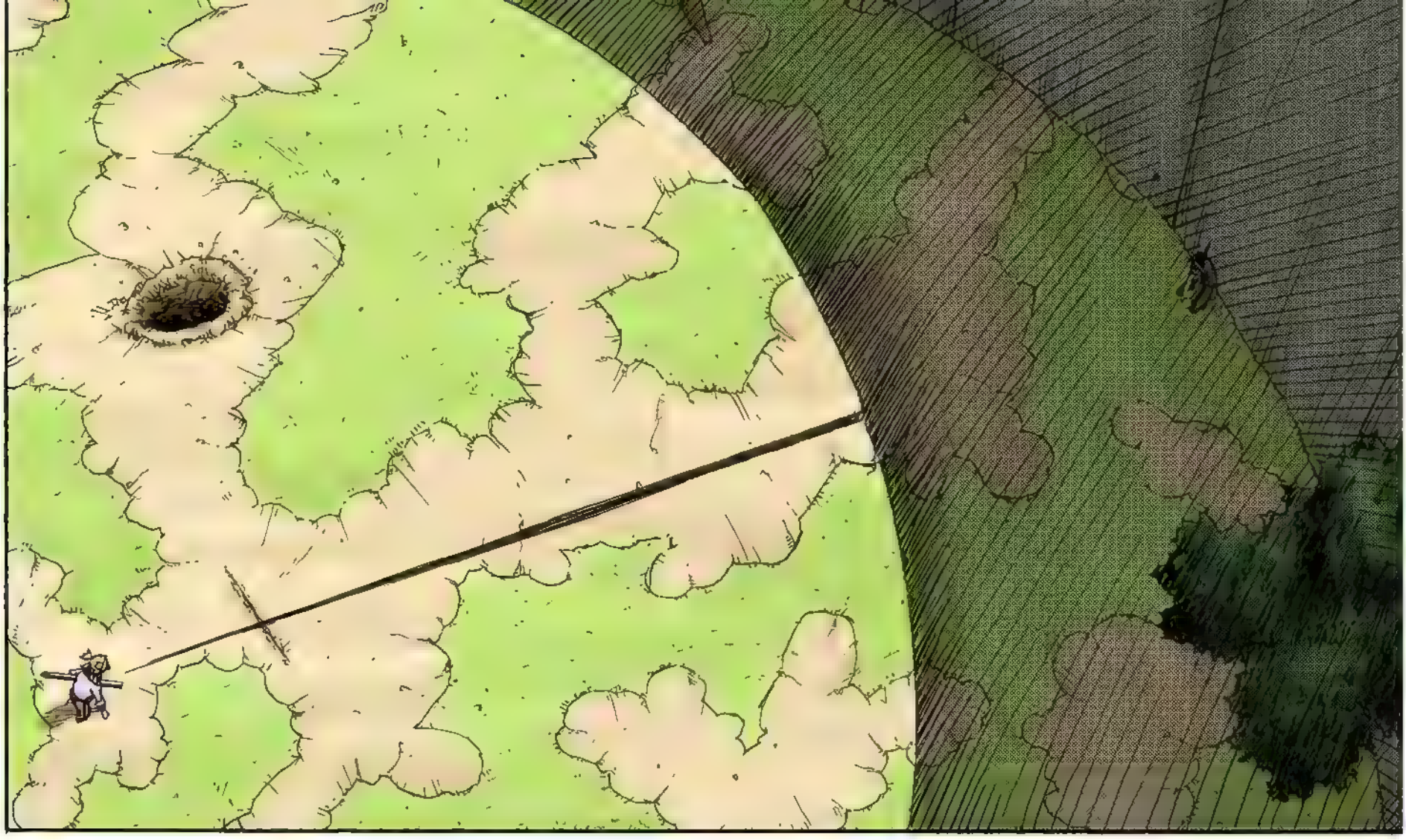


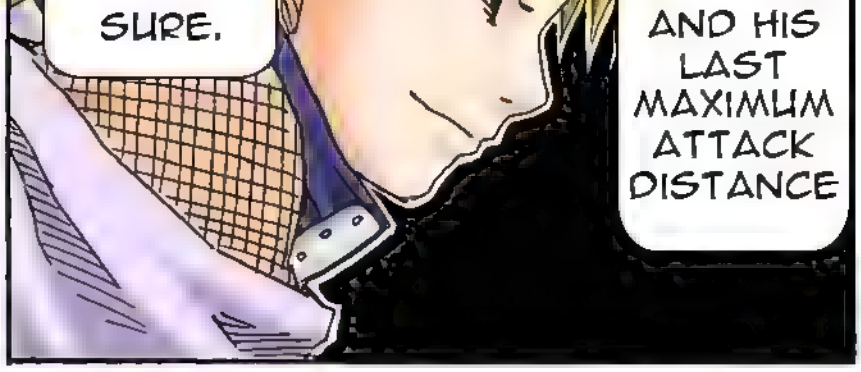


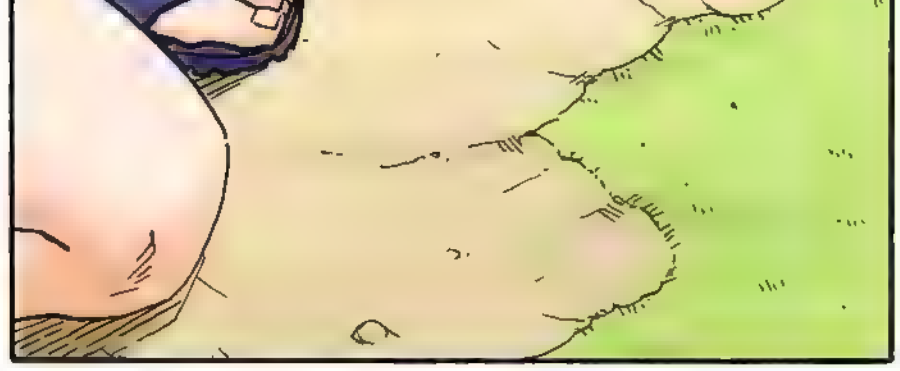


YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SHIKAMARU, DO YOU?!
IF THERE'S EVEN A LITTLE BIT OF LIGHT, YOU CAN GET A SHADOW WITHIN A SHADOW!

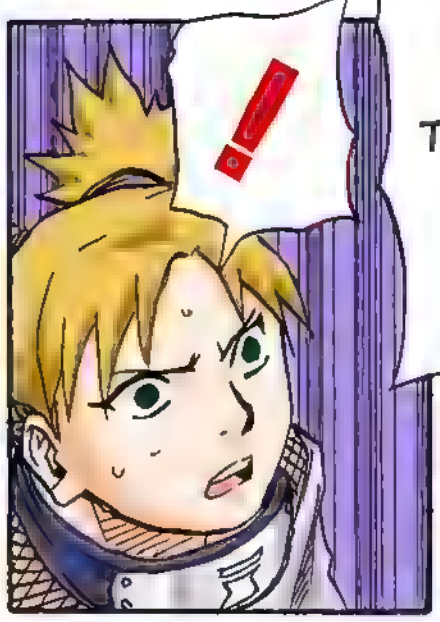

I MEAN... HE'S ALREADY WITHIN THE ARENA'S SHADOW...
BUT... HEY, HOW CAN SHIKAMARU USE HIS SHADOW, ANYWAY?
YOU'RE ALMOST THERE, SHIKAMARU!




I'M DEFIN-ITELY SAFE HERE... FOR SURE.
TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SUN'S CURRENT POSITION AND HIS LAST MAXIMUM ATTACK DISTANCE



BRIL-LIANT ...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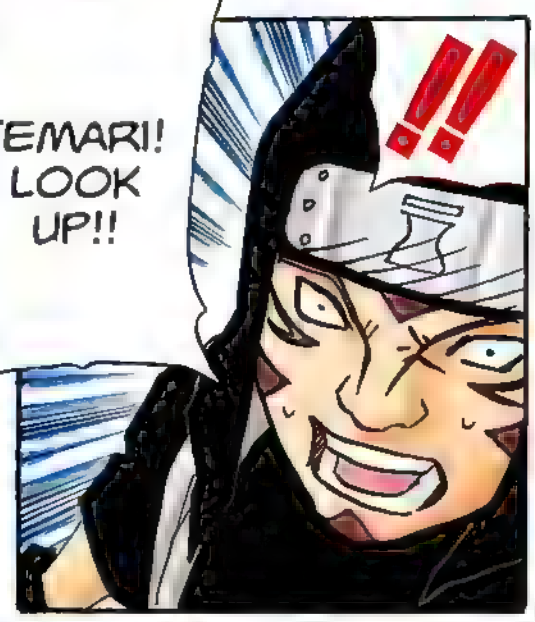
TEMARI! LOOK UP!!
!!

!

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スン…

……!?

WHAT THE ?!

NO WAY!

!

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UGH...

HAH!!

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108：勝利(じょうり)への伏線(ふくせん)…!?

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I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY!

TO GIVE HIMSELF MORE SHADOWS TO WORK WITH!

I NEVER GUESSED HE'D USE HIS VEST AS A PARACHUTE ...

ワ

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AND NOW... IF I FOCUS ON THE PARACHUTE, I'LL BE DISTRACTED FROM HIS GROUND ATTACKS!!

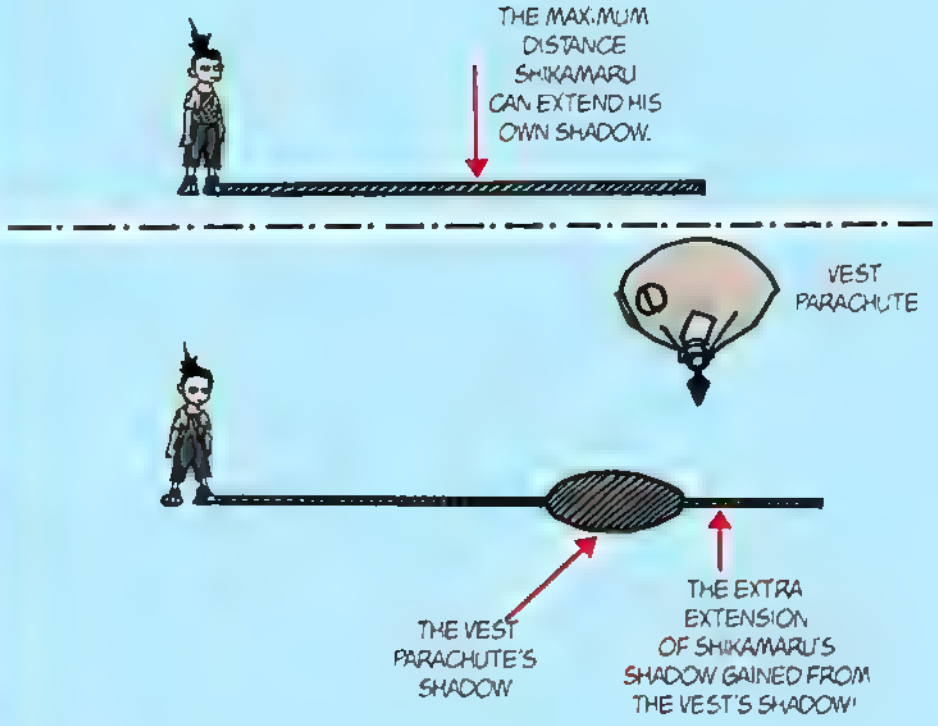
THIS GUY IS REALLY SOMETHING! WITH HIS SHADOW ATTACKS, HE FORCED ME TO KEEP MY ATTENTION ON THE GROUND... AND KEPT ME FROM NOTICING THE PARACHUTE!

...WHAT THE SHADOW POSSESSION TECHNIQUE IS ALL ABOUT!

WHAT A NASTY TACTIC ...

BUT NOW IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR ...

SHIKAMARU CAN USE HIS OWN SHADOW AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE SHADOWS IN HIS ATTACK!
IN OTHER WORDS...

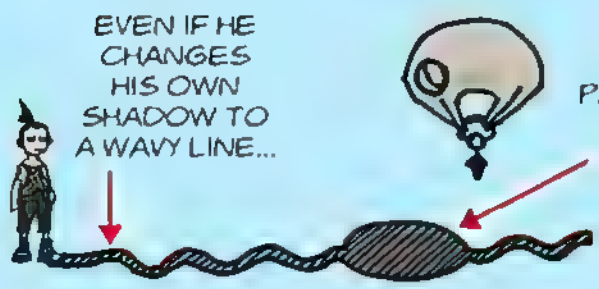

THE MAXIMUM DISTANCE SHIKAMARU CAN EXTEND HIS OWN SHADOW.
VEST PARACHUTE
THE VEST PARACHUTE'S SHADOW
THE EXTRA EXTENSION OF SHIKAMARU'S SHADOW GAINED FROM THE VEST'S SHADOW!

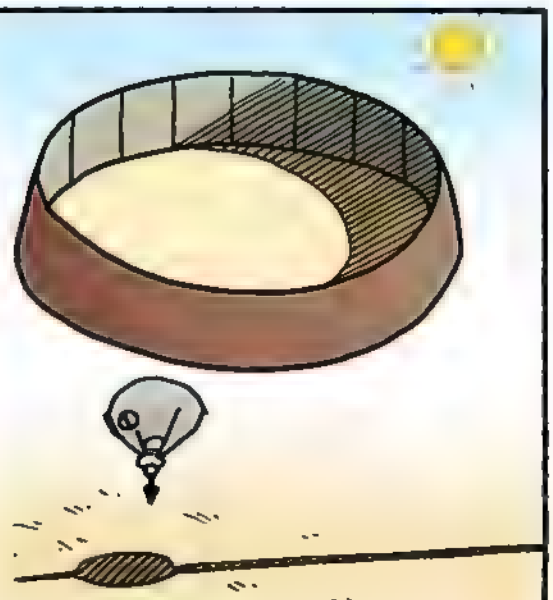
(1) HE CAN UTILIZE ANY OTHER SHADOWS (IN THIS CASE, THE PARACHUTE'S SHADOW) ALONG THE STRAIGHT LINE BETWEEN HIM AND HIS TARGET.

(2) HE CAN EXTEND HIS OWN SHADOW THE ADDITIONAL LENGTH PROVIDED BY THE OTHER SHADOW.

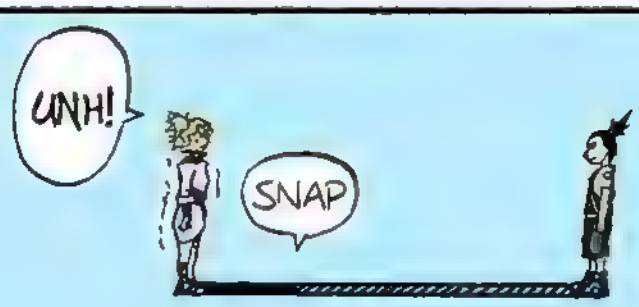
(3) SHIKAMARU CANNOT FREELY CHANGE THE SHAPE OF SHADOWS OTHER THAN HIS OWN.

THEREFORE, I MUST CONCLUDE THAT...





HOWEVER... OTHER THAN THE CHANGES CAUSED BY THE MOVEMENT OF THE SUN, THE SHAPE OF BOTH THE WALL'S AND THE VEST'S SHADOWS HAVE BEEN FIXED.



AND FROM OBSERVING HIS PREVIOUS BATTLES...

(4) ONLY WHEN HE HAS CAPTURED HIS TARGET'S SHADOW WITH **HIS OWN SHADOW** CAN HE STOP HIS TARGET'S MOVEMENTS!

ヒュ!

SO... THIS IS HOW I UNDERSTAND IT! THE SHADOW POSSESSION TECHNIQUE IS LIKE A FLEXIBLE GLUE-TRAP WHERE YOU CAN FREELY CHANGE THE SHAPE OF YOUR SHADOW... AS LONG AS YOU MAINTAIN ITS NATURAL SURFACE AREA. PLUS... YOU CAN USE ANY OTHER SHADOWS IN THE PATH OF YOUR SHADOW TO EXTEND ITS LENGTH!

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YOU MANAGED TO DODGE ME AGAIN...?

SHE'S ANALYZING AND ANTICIPAT-ING HIS ATTACKS...

HMM! THIS GIRL'S A PRETTY GOOD STRATEGIST, TOO...

HE'S GOING TOO EASY ON HER..

IF I DON'T GET THIS OVER WITH, HIS ADVANTAGE IS GOING TO KEEP GROWING ALONG WITH THE SHADOW OF THE ARENA'S WALL...

I'LL USE BUNSHIN NO JUTSU... THE ART OF THE DOPPELGANGER... TO CREATE A DIVERSION...

FIRST, I'LL HIDE BEHIND MY FAN AND CREATE A CLONE... AND THEN WHILE THE CLONE JUMPS OUT AND DISTRACTS HIM...

I I'LL BUILD UP MY CHAKRA TO THE MAXIMUM LEVEL AND SLAUGHTER HIM WITH A FULL-FORCED WIND SCYTHE ATTACK!

MY NEXT MOVE WILL END THIS!

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チラ

NOW... WHERE IS HIS SHADOW?

HERE I GO!

スススス

BUN-SHIN NO ...

INITI-ATING ATT-ACK!!

.....!

Y...YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!

.....

.....

!

.....

...N...NO WAY...

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...I'M... FROZEN?!

ピク

スウ...

...THE SHADOW POSSESSION TECHNIQUE IS A SUCCESS!

AH... FINALLY...

WHAT?!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?!

!

!?

!?

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THAT'S SHIKAMARU'S STRENGTH.

...HOW MANY STEPS AHEAD IS HE THINKING?!

THAT BOY...

YOUR SHADOW SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO REACH THIS FAR! BESIDES... I CAN SEE THE END OF IT...

WHY CAN'T I MOVE?!

TWITCH

TWITCH

!!

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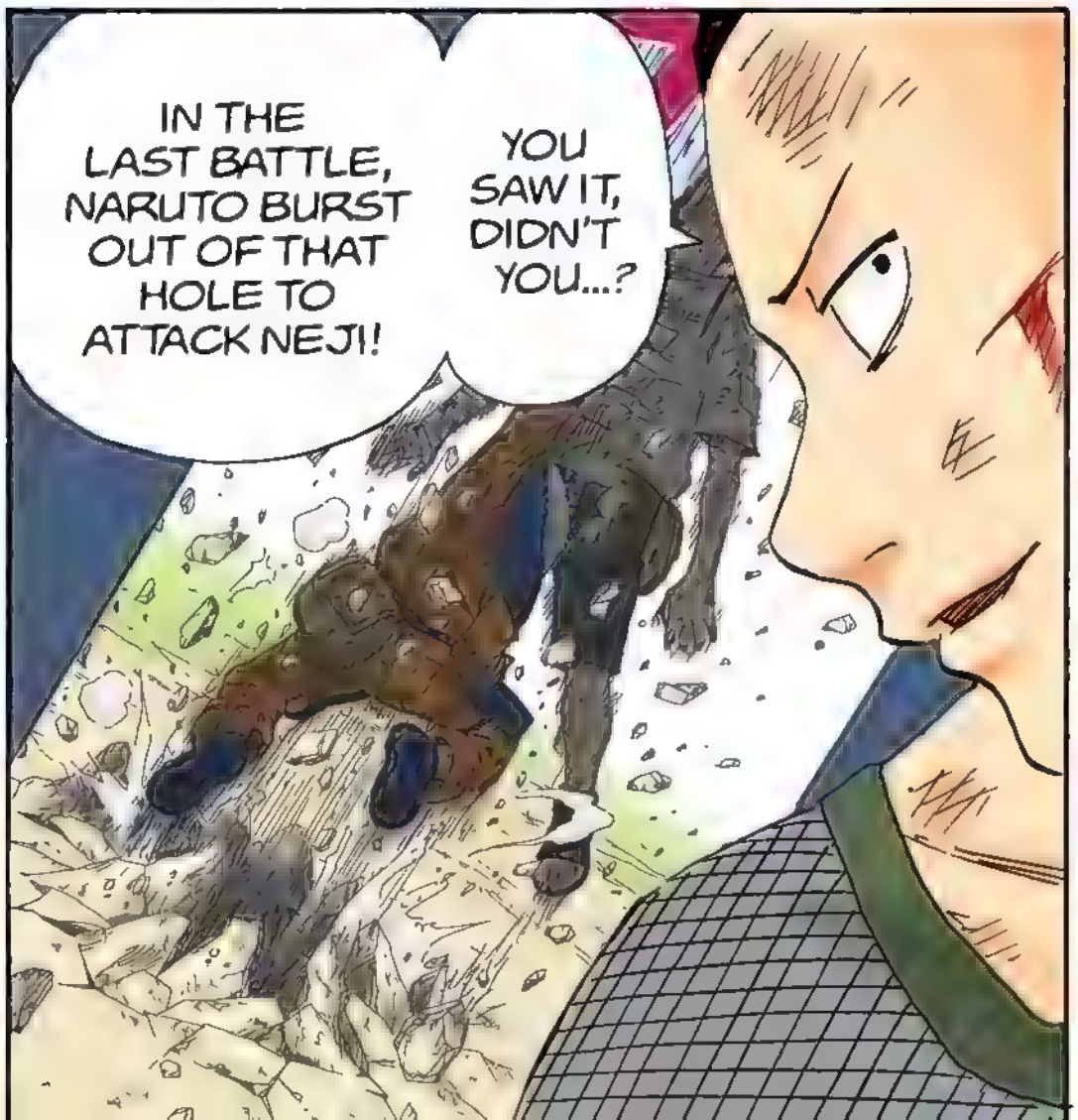
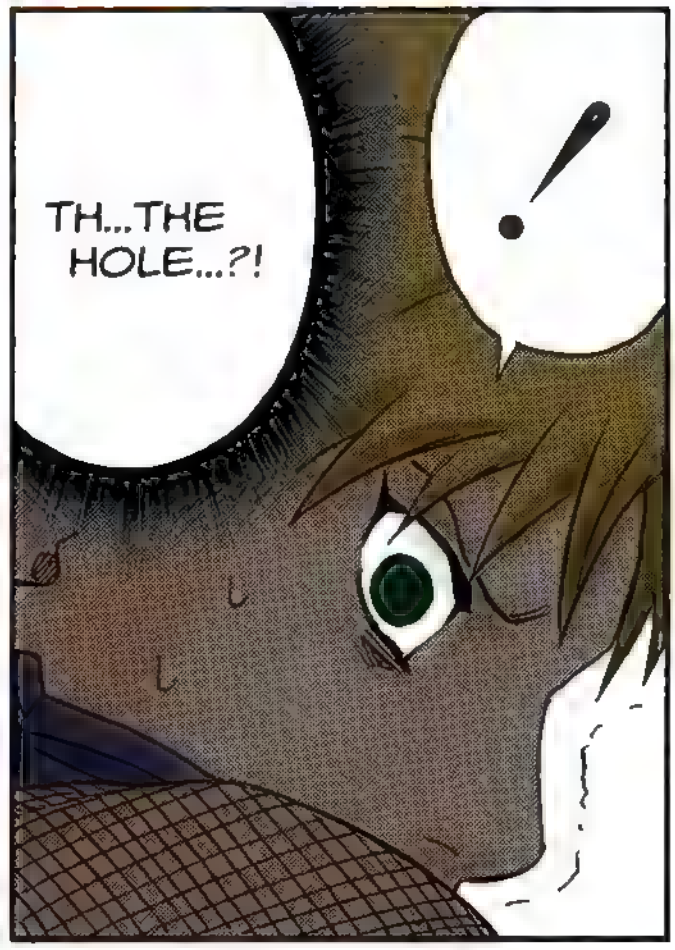
I'LL LET YOU LOOK BEHIND YOU...


IN THE LAST BATTLE, NARUTO BURST OUT OF THAT HOLE TO ATTACK NEJI!
YOU SAW IT, DIDN'T YOU...?


TH...THE HOLE...?!
!

DON'T TELL ME... YOU USED THE SHADOW INSIDE THE TUNNEL BETWEEN THE TWO HOLES...?

...HE TUNNELED UNDER THE GROUND FROM THAT BIGGER HOLE BETWEEN US...SO THEY'RE CONNECTED.

BINGO.

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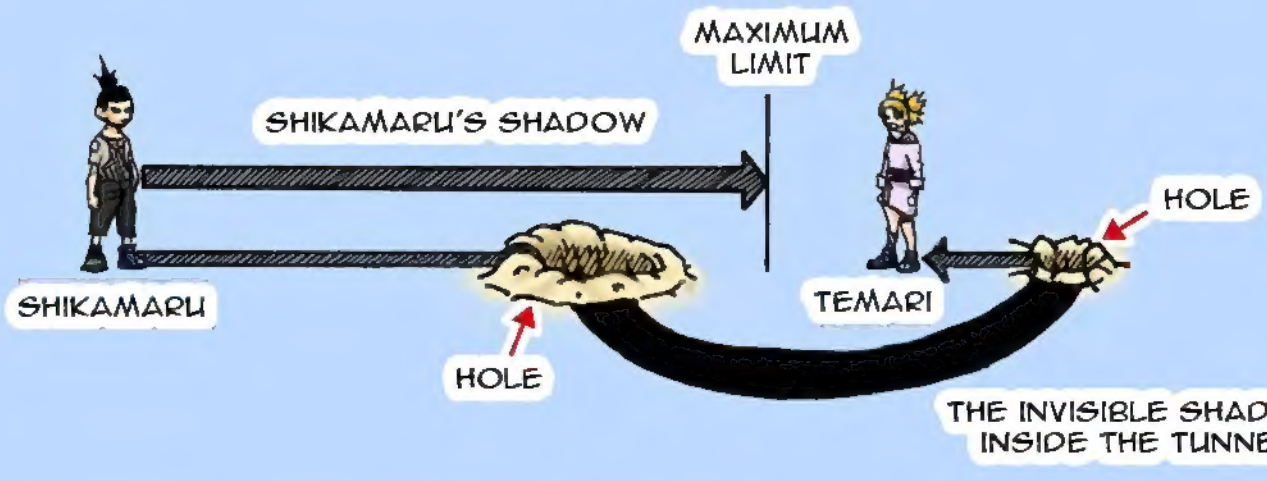
HEH... JUST LIKE A CAREFULLY CALCULATED GAME OF SHOGI! ALL HIS PREVIOUS MOVES, WHEN HE ALLOWED TEMARI TO CALCULATE THE MAXIMUM LENGTH OF HIS SHADOW, WERE JUST SUBPLOTS LEADING TO THIS GRAND FINALE! IT'S LIKE HE TRAINED HER TO DODGE THE SHADOWS CAST BY THE SUN AND THEN COAXED HER INTO HIS TRAP, USING THE TUNNEL'S INVISIBLE SHADOW TO CAPTURE HER FROM BEHIND! IT'S A TRUE CHECKMATE...



D...DON'T TELL ME...

.....

UGH!

TO MANEUVER ME TO THIS SPOT?!

THAT THING WITH THE PARACHUTE... IT WAS JUST ANOTHER DIVERSION...

YOU... YOU JERK!

HIS NEXT MOVE WILL FINISH HER...

.....

UGH!

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GO FOR IT!

ALL RIGHT! GET HER!

THIS KID WHO HADN'T MADE AN IMPRESSION ON ANYONE ENDS UP BEING A TOTAL DARK HORSE...

BEFORE THEY KNEW IT, THE WHOLE CROWD GOT WRAPPED UP IN THE MATCH...

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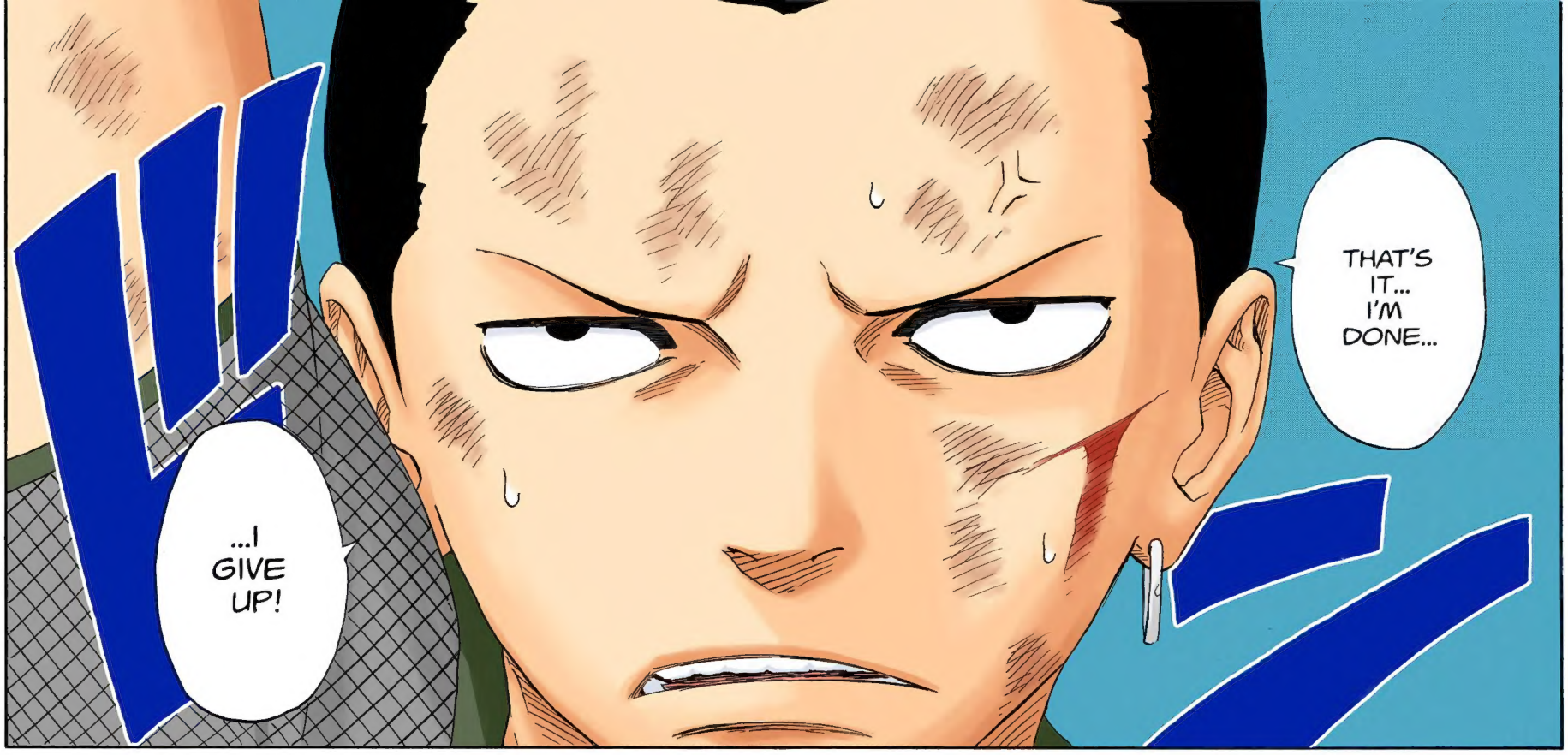
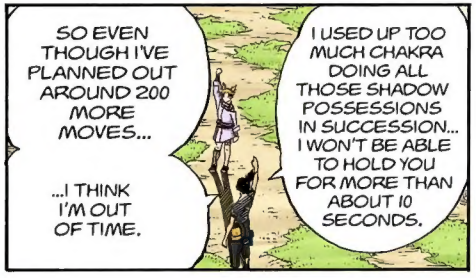

THAT'S IT... I'M DONE...
...I GIVE UP!

THE WINNER IS... TEMARI!!


SO EVEN THOUGH I'VE PLANNED OUT AROUND 200 MORE MOVES...
...I THINK I'M OUT OF TIME.
I USED UP TOO MUCH CHAKRA DOING ALL THOSE SHADOW POSSESSIONS IN SUCCESSION... I WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD YOU FOR MORE THAN ABOUT 10 SECONDS.

WHAT A WEIRD KID...
ONE MATCH IS ENOUGH FOR ME.
AND THIS FIGHTING STUFF IS GETTING TO BE A DRAG...

WHAT THE HECK DID YOU SAY?!
HUH?
.....
!!

WHAT?!
WH...
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SHIKAMARU, DO YOU, INO?!
BURP
I TOLD YOU HE WAS GONNA QUIT...